Follow us on: @TheDailyPioneer facebook.com/dailypioneer

HYDERABAD, THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4 Established 1864

# the pioneer

RNI No. TELENG/2018/76469
Established 1864
Published From
HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW
BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI
DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA
*LATE CITY VOL. 6 ISSUE 275
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

www.dailypioneer.com




the pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JULY 18, 2024



# The true colour of the new 'criminal' law

The Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) need not be called 'old British laws', just because they were made in 1973; for, even CrPC empowers the jurisdictional magistrate to grant police custody for up to 15 days in case an investigation cannot be completed within 24 hours. One day in 'jail' is not small, anything can happen in a day.

1. The text of criminal law and context: The Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, respectively. Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that the maximum period of police custody under the BNSS would remain 15 days, with provision to be spread over a maximum of two months.
2. Right to information, debate in Parliament: The Home Minister says these laws were discussed in the Lok Sabha for nine hours and 29 minutes, and in the Rajya Sabha for six hours and 17 minutes. Suggestions were sought from all MPs, Chief Ministers, Supreme Court and High Court Judges, IPS officers and Collectors in 2020. Further, the Home Minister said: "I have attended 158 consultative meetings for preparing a Bill… The Bill was sent to the Home Ministry committee, which discussed it for about three months. Most of the suggestions for reforms in criminal laws were incorporated, except four which were of a political nature. Giving political colour to this change is not good, there are many other issues for politics".
3. The true colour of the new 'criminal' law: It was also claimed that the first case registered under the BNS was related to a motorcycle theft in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior at 10 minutes past midnight. "The case was for a value of Rs 1,80,000… The case against a street vendor in Delhi was not the first case registered under the BNS; the police have disposed of the Delhi case by using the provision of review. This is the true colour of the new 'criminal' law.

***Police have no time to investigate: What generally happens is that the police do not find time to investigate because of political pressures, etc. Under new criminal laws, imprisonment in custody is being increased. For instance, (new criminal law) Section 187 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which seeks to replace the CrPC, says police custody of 15 days can be authorized in whole or in parts at any time during the initial 40 or 60 days out of the 60- or 90-day period of judicial custody.***

PART-1



PROF MADABHUSHI SRIDHAR ACHARYULU
Professor of Law, Mahindra University, Hyderabad

4. Criminality against the Constitution. The new criminal law will violate the Constitutional principles, provisions, and the new enactments, which started before the Elections and continued after that. It means civil rights are in danger and it is opposed to the Fundamental Rights of citizens.
5. Extends the period of police custody: First, we need to understand the claim of the Home Minister about the new criminal laws. The BNSS extends the period of police custody of an accused. Addressing a press conference, Shah said the maximum police custody under the BNS too would remain 15 days, like under the IPC. "I want to clarify that in BNS also the remand period is 15 days. Earlier, if an accused was sent to police remand and got himself admitted to a hospital for 15 days, there was no interrogation as his remand period would expire. But, in BNS, there will be remand for a maximum of 15 days, but it can be taken in parts within an upper limit of 60 days. He also said: the new laws would ensure "justice, instead of punishment" and "speedy trial, instead of delays". Justice would be delivered "up to the level of the Supreme Court" within three years of an FIR being registered.
6. Police have no time to investigate: What generally happens is that the police do not find time to investigate because of political pressures, etc. Under new criminal laws, imprisonment in custody is being increased. For instance, (new criminal law) Section 187 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which seeks to replace the CrPC, says police custody of 15 days can be authorized in whole or in parts at any time during the initial 40 or 60 days out of the 60- or 90-day period of judicial custody.
7. Shocking that it can extend to 60 days of custody! The police custody of 15 days may be spread over 60 days where the offence is punishable with at least 10 years of imprisonment, or 40 days for any other offence. This means the police have become more powerful and can avoid review of judicial examination of arrested persons. This could result in extra-judicial measures. The change in police custody rules is a serious concern, raised by civil rights supporters and lawyers.

*(to be continued)*

# Sanofi expansion significant for TG, says Sridhar Babu

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD



Sanofi Healthcare India Pvt. Ltd. (SHIPL) announced the expansion of its Global Capacity Centre (GCC) in Hyderabad. The company plans to invest US$ 400 million over the next six years, with US$ 100 million by 2025. The Hyderabad GCC will expand to host up to 2,600 employees, becoming the largest of Sanofi's four global hubs.

Sanofi's four Global Capacity Centres are strategically located world-wide, providing a competitive edge in delivering enterprise solutions. These hubs centralise and modernise operations, offering services from commercial, manufacturing, and supply to R&D and digital.

According to Sanofi Healthcare, established in 2019, the Hyderabad hub has grown from a medical hub to providing various services to Sanofi's global functions. This environmentally sustainable workplace creates diversity and inclusivity.

Addressing the gathering, Minister of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications, Industries & Commerce, and Legislative Affairs, D Sridhar Babu, highlighted the significance of Sanofi's expansion for Telangana's pharmaceutical landscape. He emphasised the $400 million investment and 2,600 new jobs, showing Telangana's commitment to innovation and growth. Sanofi's Executive Vice-President, Madeleine Roach, thanked Minister Sridhar Babu for supporting the GCC. She noted Hyderabad's emerging status as a shared services destination and expressed excitement about the hub's role in Sanofi's digital transformation.

## NVSS opposes transfer of priests

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

Former BJP MLA NVSS Prabhakar stated that it is not appropriate to transfer priests in temples and urged the government to refrain from such actions. He demanded that the State government release the funds of the Brahmin Welfare Parishad, which have not been allocated for the past seven months, in the upcoming budget. Prabhakar highlighted that transferring priests in Swayambhu devalayas and historically significant temples is inappropriate. Speaking to the media at the party's State office in Nampally on Tuesday, Prabhakar warned that attempts to change priests in temples with centuries of history would face court rebuke.

# World's first low-energy N-reactor launched at T-Hub

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD



Explaining that one-third of electricity generation through coal can be saved with zero emissions, Hyderabad-based startup Hylenr's CEO, Siddhartha Durairajan, has demonstrated the world's first cold fusion technology to generate clean energy. The launch took place at T-Hub on Wednesday. This innovation has received a patent from the Government of India, upon thorough inspection for its Low Energy Nuclear Reactor Technology.

CEO of T-Hub, Mahankali Srinivas Rao (MSR), formally launched the world's first low energy nuclear reactor along with Padma Shri Dr Prahlada Rama Rao, former distinguished scientist at DRDO and currently the Chief Innovation Officer, along with the founders of HYLENR at the Marvel Hall, T-Hub. Various models of low energy nuclear reactors, from small to medium, were also showcased.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Prahlada Rama Rao said that APJ Abdul Kalam, the Missile Man of India, was his dear friend and mentor who encouraged, supported and helped him to contribute positively to society beyond defense. He mentioned starting the cold fusion research, which took seven years to research and develop the formula, which has been successfully operational from three years.

Siddhartha Durairajan explained that Hylenr's Low Energy Nuclear Reactor is a promising alternative for power generation, amplifying input electricity to produce heat for applications such as space (MMRTG), steam generation, room heating in cold regions, and induction heating for domestic and industrial needs. The Hylenr devices can also significantly reduce the risk profile for space missions.

T-hub-CEO, Mahankali Srinivas Rao also commented that this innovation is truly transformative and game-changing for addressing the three major challenges of climate change, pollution and global warming.

# Abhyasa School secures top place in girls kabaddi

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD



Abhyasa Residential School bagged gold medal in U-14, U-17 categories and silver in U-19 category in the girls Kabaddi competition of AP and Telangana Regionals - 2024-25 conducted at Johnson Grammar School, Kuntloor on Wednesday. The Association of ICSE and ISC Schools of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Region conducted the AP and Telangana Regionals 2024-25.

Vinaayaka Kalleetla, Director of Abhyasa Residential School, said, "The girls have proved their mettle with superior performance. Kabaddi as we all know is a combative sport. It is nice to see girls excelling in such challenging sports."

The school has won gold medal in U-14 category and silver in U-19 category beating Johnson Grammar School, Kuntloor, while it has won in U-17 category beating Johnson Grammar School, Mallapur.

In the case of boys, they have shown a round performance in the Hockey competition.

## 'Cong govt redefining...

*Continued from page 3*

Under the Mahalakshmi Scheme, the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation had issued nearly 55 crore zero tickets to women passengers, providing them the independence and freedom to travel.

Uttam Kumar Reddy pointed out that cooking gas cylinders at Rs 500 benefited around 40 lakh women, with each household saving over Rs 700 per month. The scheme would be fine-tuned to include additional beneficiaries, while ensuring that every eligible woman received the benefits of the Mahalakshmi scheme -- one of the six guarantees made by the Congress before the elections.

Under the Gruha Jyothi scheme, lakhs of families had been receiving free electricity for up to 200 units, empowering women by reducing their electricity expenses. Additionally, the Indiramma Indlu scheme aimed to provide houses to homeless poor families. Around 4.50 lakh houses had been sanctioned with an outlay of Rs 22,500 crore in the first phase. These houses would be sanctioned in the name of women beneficiaries, granting them the authority to manage their families better.

## Accused snooped on Revanth...

*Continued from page 3*

Before the elections, during the Assembly campaigning period in 2023 October, then TPCC Revanth Reddy said that they had tapped phones and put surveillance on every one. "They had formed a group of people and intercepted the phones of retired officers. He (KTR) gave an accelerated promotion to D Praneeth Rao. We will review every activity they have done," Revanth Reddy warned.

"As they are snooping on our phones, they are getting every minute information from us. When someone wants to give some assistance to the Congress, KTR is threatening them. KTR himself threatened our friends and relatives not to cooperate with us," Revanth Reddy mentioned.

"We will put a special focus on these telephone activities after December 9, after the Congress government comes into power," Revanth Reddy had added.

It has been 127 days since the first accused in the phone-tapping case was arrested in Siricilla. Later, the police arrested the other three accused in this case. Two others in the case are absconding.

## K'taka bill on hold...

*Continued from page 3*

Reacting strongly to the state government move, industry veterans objected to the proposed quota, calling it 'fascist,' and 'short-sighted'.Well-known entrepreneur and former Chief Finance Officer of Infosys, TV Mohandas Pai dubbed the bill as "regressive"."This bill should be junked. It is discriminatory, regressive and against the constitution, @Jairam_Ramesh (Congress leader) is govt to certify who we are? This is a fascist bill as in Animal Farm, unbelievable that @INCIndia can come up with a bill like this- a govt officer will sit on recruitment committees of private sector? People have to take a language test?" Pai said on 'X'.Pharma company Biocon Managing Director Kiran Mazumdar Shaw said, "As a tech hub we need skilled talent and whilst the aim is to provide jobs for locals, we must not affect our leading position in technology by this move.

## TG cadre IAS...

*Continued from page 3*

Reacting to the social media, Praful said, "For all those who are raising questions about my benchmark disability certificate and sharing false information, I have applied for UPSC exam with a benchmark disability certificate issued by the competent authority. During UPSC examination 2018, after that I'm a person with benchmark disability. But I couldn't clear the exam in 2018. During my UPSC examination 2019, again I have appeared for personality test/ interview and the next day again as per procedure, I have appeared in front of the Medical Board AIIMS Delhi. Again after thorough examination, the Medical Board certified that I'm a person with benchmark disability. And the same report was shared with DOPT and UPSC".He said, "I agree that persons who claim benefits on false information should be punished but at the same time we should be sensitive towards people who are genuine.

## 'No farmer would be left...

*Continued from page 3*

"No farmer would be left out", he said.

Since the government was doing its best to reach out to indebted farmers, Bhatti wanted Congress leaders to take the loan waiver programme to "every polling booth and every voter".

"Holding your head high, publicise the loan waiver scheme ", he said. The previous KCR government that came to power with a surplus budget had implemented Rs 1 lakh loan waiver scheme in four instalments at the rate of Rs 25,000. But the Congress party came to power and formed the government inherited loan burden of Rs 7 lakh crore . Yet, we are implementing Rs 2 lakh loan waiver scheme within a few months, he pointed out. Despite financial difficulties, the Congress government implemented five guarantee schemes within a few days after coming to power. But these guarantee schemes were not being publicised to the desired extent at the field level, he rued. Everyone was surprised when Chief Minister Revanth Reddy announced before the General Election that loan waiver scheme would be completed before the end of August. Some thought it was an announcement for votes in the wake of elections. But belying everyone's scepticism, "we are indeed going to implement loan waiver as we have carefully mobilised the funds, rupee by rupee," Bhatti, who holds the finance portfolio, said.

Implementation of loan waiver scheme would improve the image of all Congress leaders and it was imperative for Congress leaders to reach out to every village and tell people that the Congress government had kept its word. The Congress Party would be committed to its word and this fact should be explained to farmers to win their hearts, he said.

## Sparks BRS...

*Continued from page 3*

The dismal election results have prompted proposals to revert to TRS as the party's name. Party leader and former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is reportedly considering these possibilities. There are rumors about a prominent party figure advocating for the name change to reconnect with the public. The sight of Harish Rao wearing the TRS scarf has intrigued party members and political observers alike. Whether this was a coincidence or has a deeper significance remains unclear, adding an element of suspense to the ongoing discussions within BRS.

## TODAY

### ALMANAC

| | |
|---|---|
| **Month & Paksham:** | Sukla Paksha |
| **Tithi:** Dwadashi: | Jul 17 09:03 PM to Jul 18 08:44 PM |
| Trayodashi: | Jul 18 08:44 PM to Jul 19 07:41 PM |
| **Nakshatram:** | |
| Jyeshta: | Jul 18 03:12 AM to Jul 19 03:25 AM |
| Moola: | Jul 19 03:25 AM to Jul 20 02:55 AM |
| **Rahukalam:** | 1:59 PM to 3:36 PM |
| **Yamagandam:** | 5:54 AM to 7:31 AM |
| **Varjyam:** | 01:21 AM to 02:55 AM |
| **Gulika:** | 9:08 AM to 10:45 AM |
| **Amritakalam:** | 06:32 PM to 08:09 PM |
| **Abhijit Muhurtham:** | 11:56 AM to 12:48 PM |

### HYDERABAD WEATHER

**Forecast:** Rain
**Temp:** 27°c
**Humidity:** 84%
**Sunrise:** 5:51 AM
**Sunset:** 6:54 PM

**Updated:** July 17, 2024 5:00 PM

## A slap on Cong's...

*Continued from page 3*

He described the court's ruling as "a slap on the face of Congress for its misuse of power against KCR". He urged the Congress to learn from this and to focus on public issues, rather than continuing with revenge politics. KTR warned that if the Congress did not change its ways, people would deliver a similar verdict in the public arena. Even the Almighty's court would teach the Congress a lesson for its malicious campaigns. "Despite all the conspiracies and deceptions, truth ultimately prevails", KTR concluded.

Besides, KTR posted on X: "Satyameva Jayate! Political vendetta and victimization have limits. The Supreme Court's decision reaffirms that victimization cannot endure for long. The judicial court has made landmark remarks on the misuse of power in KCR garu's case.

## All set for crop loan...

*Continued from page 3*

Unlike during the reign of former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, who had made 'false promises and deceived farmers', the present government was committed to genuine loan waivers. Therefore, Rs. 2 lakh would be waived in one go to uphold farmers' dignity. He urged everyone to explain the good work being done to the public and organize programmes at village, mandal, and constituency levels. He asked them to proudly state that the loan waiver promise had been kept and to create a festive atmosphere with celebrations in all areas. Over the past seven months, the state government had spent Rs. 30,000 crore on welfare programs, the Chief Minister said. The Chief Minister criticized KCR for failing to waive even Rs. 28,000 crore of farmers' loans despite being in power for 10 years. He emphasized that the Congress party, during the Parliament election campaign, had promised to waive farmers' loans by August 15. Although financial experts had stated that loan waivers were challenging and could create financial difficulties for the government, his government did not budge. Highlighting the integrity of the Gandhi family, Revanth Reddy recalled how Sonia Gandhi had made the bold decision to grant statehood to Telangana, despite knowing that it could harm the party's interests. He observed "When the Gandhi family makes a promise; it is like a rock inscription".

## Route map ready...

*Continued from page 3*

Therefore, the need for additional funds to bring over six lakh acres under cultivation was highlighted at the review.

Projects have been categorized into 'A', 'B', and 'C' based on priority. Those nearing completion are in category A, which includes projects worth Rs. 240.66 crore to bring 47,882 acres under cultivation. Ongoing projects estimated to need over Rs. 7,500 crore aim to bring 5,84,770 acres under cultivation. The Nirmal District Sadar Matt project is expected to be completed by the end of this month, and the Rajiv Gandhi Canal (Sitarama Project) in Khammam District will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on August 15, Uttam Kumar Reddy said.

On Kaleshwaram, Uttam said, "On July 20, I will be meeting NDSA chairman. We will review with them on the next steps as we took measures for the monsoon."

*Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.*

**Printed and published by B Krishna Prasad for and on behalf of CMYK Printech Ltd., Phone: 040-23322341, Hyderabad Office: F-502, Diamond Block, Lumbini Rockdale, Somajiguda, Hyderabad - 500 082. Telangana. Printed at Sree Seshasai Enterprises, Plot No.19, IDA Balanagar , Hyderbad-500037, Medchal -Malkajgiri District, Telangana. Editor-in-Chief: Shobori Ganguli. Resident Editor: B Krishna Prasad, AIR SURCHARGE of Rs 2.00.**

Follow us on: @TheDailyPioneer facebook.com/dailypioneer

HYDERABAD, THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4

Established 1864

RNI No. TELENG/2018/76469
*LATE CITY VOL. 6 ISSUE 275
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

# the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Published From: HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA



'No takers for 18 lakh jobs in financial services sector' 8



LAVANYA
GUDELLI: ASPIRE TO INSPIRE, BEFORE YOU EXPIRE 9

'I took inspiration from my father-in-law to play a cop in Rippen SWAMY' P11



QUOTE OF THE DAY
the pioneer

*BRS would not rest until the MLAs who defected to the ruling Congress Party become former MLAs. Constituencies represented by the BRS turncoat MLAs will soon go to by-elections. When YS Rajasekhar Reddy was the chief minister, as many as 12 BRS MLAs switched their allegiance to the Congress. But the conspiracies did not work. Justice triumphed at last.*



*- Harish Rao, BRS MLA*

P5

## DON'T MISS...

### Centre's advisory to all states on...

Following reports of Zika virus cases, the Union Health Ministry has issued an advisory to all states to emphasise the importance of maintaining constant vigilance and implementing proactive measures to control the spread of the virus. Zika virus is a mosquito-borne illness that was first identified in monkeys in Uganda in 1947. Recently, Zika cases have emerged in India, affecting states such as Kerala, Telangana and Maharashtra. Individuals infected with the virus do not exhibit symptoms at first...

-PAGE: 4

### Delhi Police arrest man for looting...

Delhi Police arrested a man, who along with his associates, looted four kilograms of gold from a jeweller in Telangana and shot at two people during the robbery, officials said on Wednesday.Sumit Dagar was declared a proclaimed offender in a murder case in Delhi after he did not surrender before the court on March 30, 2022, they said. On March 1, 2019, Dagar and his four associates killed Imran in Delhi over an old rivalry, police said."After killing Imran, he was arrested and granted parole. After getting parole...

-PAGE: 5

### PWC for extension of beneficial tax...

Tax consultancy firm PWC has urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharman to extend the beneficial tax regime for new manufacturing companies and introduce a comprehensive tax amnesty scheme for cases related to Customs. Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget for 2024-25 on July 23. "I think the Make in India is the first thing which comes to mind, and you will recall that in 2019, the government introduced a 15 per cent rate for new manufacturing companies, which lapsed on...

-PAGE: 8

### Suryakumar holds 2nd spot, Jaiswal...

The big-hitting Suryakumar Yadav is the highest placed Indian at second spot, while young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal occupies the sixth position in the ICC T20I batting rankings issued on Wednesday. Ruturaj Gaikwad has dropped a place to the eighth position in the T20 batters' list, which was updated following India's recent 4-1 series triumph over Zimbabwe. Jaiswal was the big winner following his 141 runs in the series as he rose four places, behind No.1 ranked batter Travis Head of...

-SPORTS

GODAVARI BASIN

## Route map ready to complete irrigation projects by 2025

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



The Telangana government has prepared a route map to expedite the construction of pending irrigations projects, Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy announced here on Wednesday. In line with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's recent promise during his visit to Mahabubnagar, plans have been drawn to complete projects in the district by December 2025, he added.

During a comprehensive review at Jalasoudha with irrigation department officials, Uttam Kumar Reddy discussed the progress of ongoing projects as well as those that are yet to be initiated across the state, including the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy Lift Irrigation Scheme (LIS), Koil Sagar, RB LIS, JNLIS, Dindi LIS, AMRS LBC, Nettempadu, Bheema, and Kalwakurthy LIS. Additionally, he reviewed projects in the Godavari basin like Chinna Kaleshwaram, Nilwai, Palem Vagu, Mathadi Vagu, SRSP Phase 2, Chanaka Korata, Lower Penganga, Devadula, Modikunta Vagu, SYPII, JCRDLIS, and Sitarama LIS.

According to Uttam Kumar Reddy, to complete the projects in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district and others in the Godavari basin such as Chinna Kaleshwaram, Modikunta, Lower Penganga, and Chanaka Korata, an estimated Rs. 8,000 crore is required. To meet the target of completing these projects by December 2025, an additional budget proposal of Rs. 11,000 crore had been sent to the Finance Department after discussions with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

Out of the Rs. 28,000 crore budget allocated for irrigation, Rs. 18,000 crore is being used for interest payments on loans taken by the previous government, while another Rs. 2,000 crore goes towards salaries and allowances.

2

# All set for crop loan waiver

## Loans totaling Rs 7,000 crore to be waived today

- Crop loan waiver in three phases by August, asserts CM
- 'Nation must emulate 'TG model' of farm policies'



Revanth Reddy addressing a meeting with MLAs, MLCs, MPs, and Congress leaders at Praja Bhavan on Wednesday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has said that crop loans up to Rs 1 lakh would be waived by Thursday evening, with Rs 7,000 crore being credited to the concerned farmers' accounts. Telangana should stand as a model for the nation in agricultural policies. "The Telangana model in agriculture should be emulated by the country", he said.

Revanth Reddy held a meeting with MLAs, MLCs, MPs, and Congress leaders at Praja Bhavan. During the meeting, he discussed various issues and reiterated the commitment made by AICC leader Rahul Gandhi on May 6, 2022, during the unveiling of the Warangal Declaration, when he promised loan waiver for farmers up to Rs 2 lakh.

*'By the end of the month, loans up to Rs. 1.5 lakh will be waived, and by August, the process will be completed with waiver of loans up to Rs. 2 lakh.*

"This as an unforgettable day in my life," Revanth Reddy remarked, and announced that by 4:00 PM on Thursday, farmers' loans up to Rs. 1 lakh would be waived, with Rs. 7,000 crore being directly credited to their accounts. By the end of the month, loans up to Rs. 1.5 lakh will be waived, and by August, the process will be completed with waiver of loans up to Rs. 2 lakh. The Congress government aimed to free every farmer from debt burden.

2

### 'No farmer would be left out in loan waiver'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Waiver of farmers' loans up to Rs 2 lakh will be completed before the end of August, asserted Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu. He was speaking to key Congress leaders at the Praja Bhavan here on Wednesday.Bhatti said that they had spent several sleepless nights for the implementation of loan waiver scheme, given the precarious financial situation in which the State was left by the previous BRS government. Yet, the government mobilised rupee by rupee, and took up the loan waiver programme , he said.

Making it clear that all the indebted farmers' families would be extended loan waiver, the Deputy CM said that even six lakh families without ration cards would also be covered.

Continued on Page 2

HARISH WEARS 'TRS' SCARF

## Sparks BRS name change debate



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With former minister Harish Rao wearing around his neck on Wednesday a scarf emblazoned with the name 'TRS'; there is fresh talk in party and other circles that the Bharat Rashtra Samithi could soon revert to 'Telangana Rashtra Samithi', the name with which the party was registered.

The BRS faced significant losses in the recent Assembly and Lok Sabha elections.

Harish Rao attended a meeting with activists in Patancheru on Wednesday and spoke to the media. During this meeting, he was seen wearing a TRS scarf, a clip of which went viral on social media. It also fueled speculations within the party, with several leaders underlining that the party's decline began after it changed its name from TRS to BRS.

2

100% QUOTA FOR KANNADIGAS IN PRIVATE FIRMS

## K'taka bill on hold due to backlash

PNS ■ BENGALURU



The Karnataka government on Wednesday put the reservation bill for Kannadigas in private firms on hold amid fierce criticism from business leaders and tech tycoons.

The Karnataka State Employment of Local Candidates in the Industries, Factories and Other Establishments Bill, 2024 was cleared by the state Cabinet on Monday and was expected to be tabled in the assembly on Thursday.

"The bill approved by the Cabinet to provide reservation for Kannadigas in private sector organisations, industries and enterprises has been temporarily put on hold. This will be revisited and decided in the coming days," a statement issued by the Office of the Chief Minister said on Wednesday.

Earlier, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah also posted on X: "The bill intended to implement reservation for Kannadigas in private sector institutions, industries and enterprises is still in the preparation stage. A final decision will be taken after comprehensive discussion in the next cabinet meeting."

According to the Bill, "Any industry, factory or other establishments shall appoint 50 per cent of local candidates in management categories and 70 per cent in non-management categories."

2

### TG cadre IAS officer Praful in disability certificate row

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Akin to the Puja Khedkar, a Maharashtra cadre IAS trainee, forged a locomotor disability certificate to claim reservation in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), similar allegations surfaced against Telangana cadre 2019 batch IAS officer Praful Desai.

The allegations against Karimnagar Additional Collector surfaced on the social media are based on people on Twitter sharing photos of the officer cycling, playing tennis, rafting and horse riding, claiming you've fully recovered after rigorous training at LBSNAA. Praful as an IAS officer from the 2019 batch with AIR 532 in the EWS and orthopedically handicapped category.

Continued on Page 2

SC VERDICT

## A slap on Cong's face for bid to defame KCR: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Bharat Rashtra Samithi working president and legislator KT Rama Rao has emphasized that there should be a limit to political vendettas and revenge.

In a press statement, he characterized the Supreme Court's recent verdict, dismissing defamatory attempts against KCR regarding power purchase agreements, as "a significant reprimand to the Congress party".

KTR stated that he always wished politics would be free from vendettas and revenge. However, he criticized the Congress party for neglecting governance and focusing more on political vendettas since it came to power. The Congress had crossed all limits in its defamatory campaign against KCR. The Supreme Court's verdict, he noted, clearly indicates that such attempts would not sustain for long. KTR highlighted that the Supreme Court found the government's efforts to defame KCR in relation to power purchase agreements to be unfounded.

Continued on Page 2

HEAVY EXCHANGE OF FIRE IN GADCHIROLI

## 12 Naxals killed in encounter

PNS ■ GADCHIROLI



At least 12 Naxalites were killed and two security personnel injured in an encounter with police and commandos in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra near the Chhattisgarh border on Wednesday, officials said.

The heavy exchange of fire broke out in the afternoon between C60 commandos and Naxals in Wandoli village and continued for six hours, Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police Nilotpal said.

Police have recovered 12 bodies of Maoists from the spot besides seven automotive weapons, including 3 AK-47s, 2 INSAS rifles, a carbine and an SLR, he said.One of the slain Naxals was identified as DVCM Laxman Atram alias Vishal Atram, incharge of Tipagad Dalam.

P4

### DSC exam begins today




PHONE-TAPPING CASE

### Accused snooped on Revanth & kin in the name of 'RR Module'

CHITHALURI REVANTH
■ HYDERABAD

A group of 20 policemen reportedly formed as a group and tapped the phones of then opposition leader and now Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, before the Congress came to power in the State in 2023. They allegedly snooped on Revanth Reddy's phones, along with those his family members, friends and relatives in the name of 'RR Module'.

A highly placed source hinted, "One of the accused in the phone-tapping case led the tapping group and tapped friends and relatives of Revanth Reddy's phones in the name of 'RR Module''.

During the BRS regime, the accused had created hundreds of profiles and tapped their phones. These allegedly include businessmen, politicians, friends and relatives of some prominent people.

2

## 'Cong govt redefining women empowerment'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Civil Supplies and Irrigation Minister Capt N Uttam Kumar Reddy has asserted that the Congress government in Telangana is redefining women's empowerment, considering that most of the schemes being implemented in the state were women-oriented.

He was speaking at the swearing-in ceremony of Nerella Sharada as the Chairperson of the Telangana State Commission for Women at Buddha Bhavan on Wednesday.

Uttam Kumar Reddy highlighted the 'innovative' schemes launched by the Congress government to ensure economic empowerment of women. In the context, he mentioned that schemes like Mahalakshmi, Gruha Jyothi, and Indiramma Indlu benefited lakhs of women. More than 14 lakh women were utilising the free travel service in RTC buses across Telangana daily.

2

NITI AAYOG RECONSTITUTED

## *15 Ministers including NDA allies part of it*

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The Narendra Modi-led NDA government on Tuesday reconstituted the NITI Aayog, with four full-time members and 15 union ministers, including from BJP allies, as either ex-officio members or special invitees.Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains the chairperson and economist Suman K Bery will continue to be the vice-chairperson of NITI Aayog, according to an official notification.

Scientist V K Saraswat, agricultural economist Ramesh Chand, paediatrician V K Paul and macro-economist Arvind Virmani will also continue to be full-time members of the government think-tank.

The four ex-officio members will be Union Ministers Rajnath Singh (Defence), Amit Shah (Home), Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Agriculture) and Nirmala Sitharaman (Finance).

The prime minister has approved the revised composition of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), the notification said.

The special invitees in the reconstituted NITI Aayog will be Union ministers Nitin Gadkari (Road Transport and Highways), Jagat Prakash Nadda (Health), H D Kumaraswamy (Heavy Industries and Steel), Jitan Ram Manjhi (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh (Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying).

Other special invitees are Union Ministers Virendra Kumar (Social Justice and Empowerment), Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu (Civil Aviation), Jual Oram (Tribal Affairs), Annpurna Devi (Women and Child Development), Chirag Paswan (Food Processing Industries) and Rao Inderjit Singh (Statistics and Programme Implementation).

*Other special invitees are Union Ministers Virendra Kumar (Social Justice and Empowerment), Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu (Civil Aviation), Jual Oram (Tribal Affairs), Annpurna Devi (Women and Child Development), Chirag Paswan (Food Processing Industries) and Rao Inderjit Singh (Statistics and Programme Implementation).*

the pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JULY 18 , 2024



INFECTIONS DURING PREGNANCY

# Centre's advisory to all states on awareness about Zika virus

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Following reports of Zika virus cases, the Union Health Ministry has issued an advisory to all states to emphasise the importance of maintaining constant vigilance and implementing proactive measures to control the spread of the virus.

Zika virus is a mosquito-borne illness that was first identified in monkeys in Uganda in 1947. Recently, Zika cases have emerged in India, affecting states such as Kerala, Telangana and Maharashtra. Individuals infected with the virus do not exhibit symptoms at first but when symptoms occur, they are usually mild and include rash, fever, muscle and joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). These symptoms typically appear 3-14 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Some countries have reported an increase in neurological issues, such as Guillain-Barré syndrome, during Zika outbreaks.

The Zika virus primarily spreads through the bite of an infected female Aedes mosquito. It can also be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy or childbirth. While the virus has been detected in breast milk, transmission through breastfeeding remains unconfirmed. Additionally, Zika can be spread through sexual contact.

In regards to pregnancy, the babies suffer from serious abnormalities known as congenital Zika syndrome. This includes brain abnormalities like microcephaly (small head size), brain calcifications, limb contractures, increased muscle tone, eye abnormalities and hearing loss.

The risk is higher if the infection occurs in the early weeks of pregnancy. In 2016, the WHO declared a public health emergency due to Zika virus infections during pregnancy. Health facilities and hospitals are directed to appoint a nodal officer responsible for ensuring premises remain Aedes mosquito-free.

Dr Tarakeswari, Chief Medical Director, Fernandez Hospital urged hospitals, "Please maintain constant vigilance by screening pregnant women for Zika virus infection and monitoring the growth of fetuses in expecting mothers who test positive. Abstinence from sex or consistent condom use with partners returning from Zika-affected areas can prevent sexual transmission."

Diagnosing Zika virus involves RT-PCR testing of blood within seven days of symptom onset.

The virus can also be detected in other body fluids such as saliva, urine and amniotic fluid. In urine, Zika virus can be identified up to three weeks after symptom onset. Detection of IgM antibodies in maternal blood samples can also confirm the diagnosis.

## Successful liver transplant for kid at Osmania

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State government hospitals are providing excellent healthcare services.

At the Osmania General Hospital, successful liver transplants have already been performed on eight children and 30 adults. Recently, another liver transplant was successfully completed on a young child.

Master Chohan Aditya, a three-year-old from Kondavanamala village in Konijerla mandal, Khammam district, was suffering from biliary atresia and liver issues since birth. The surgical gastroenterology and liver transplant team led by Dr Madhusudan, successfully performed the liver transplant on Aditya at Osmania Hospital on the third of this month.

Aditya's mother, Amala, donated a portion of her liver to her son.

Currently, both mother and son are in good health and were discharged from the hospital on Tuesday.

MONSOON REGATTA

# TG sailors dominate Under-16 Optimist fleet on Day 3

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



The 15th edition of Monsoon Regatta, hosted by the Telangana Sailing Association and the Yacht Club of Hyderabad, continues on Day 3 with strong performance and dominating the Under-16 Optimist fleet. Govardhan Pallara, Lahiri Komaravelly and her sister Deekshita Komaravelly from Udbhav School, each won a race on Wednesday.

As per the Telangana Sailing Association, Govardhan is leading comfortably but needs to stay focused with four races left. Lahiri was the heroine of the day, despite fracturing her arm in an accident and missing two months of practice, returned to win a race and is 19th out of 39 sailors. Deekshita finished strong with a win in the final race of the day, which saw wind speeds reach 15 knots.

In the International Laser Class Association, ILCA4 Boys, Krishna Divaker from TSC Mysore leads, with Eklavya Batham from NSS Madhya Pradesh now in third. The ILCA4 Girls are led by Somya Singh and Alia.

Nikhil Mandavkar and Satyam Jha from NBSC Goa maintain their lead in the 29er Skiff Class. In the 420 Open, Divyanshi Mishra and Anurag Sendhav from NSS Madhya Pradesh are ahead, while Thanuja Kameshwar and Vaishnavi are tied at the top in the International 420 Mixed.

The Monsoon Regatta also sailed the Half Rig Fleet for lighter and younger sailors. Syyad Ashraf, aged 11, from Thara Boys Home won gold. Yuvraj Gupta, aged 9, from Nallagutta Govt School, and Pardhu Telugu, aged 11, from Udbhav School, won silver and bronze.

In the girls Half Rig fleet, Akhila Koppula, aged 13, and Nikitha Jeeru, aged 12, both from Rainbow Homes Musheerabad, won gold and silver.

## SBI holds Cyclothon with 'Pedal for the plant' theme

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

SBI Hyderabad Circle organised Cyclothon at PV Gyan Bhoomi, Necklace Road, Hyderabad, for promoting sustainability initiative measures among the staff. The Probationary Officers of 2023 batch, along with senior officials participated in the event with lot of enthusiasm. The theme for the event was 'Pedal for the Planet' to care for our land and our future.

The event was flagged off by Rajesh Kumar, Chief General Manager of Hyderabad Circle and other senior executives of the Circle. Speaking on the occasion, Rajesh Kumar said that the SBI and its employees always take pride in being the companion in India's journey towards sustainability, be it agricultural sector, industries, infrastructure, education, science and technology. To percolate the culture of sustainability in the minds of the young officers who recently joined the SBI fold, the Hyderabad circle has undertaken the Cyclothon activity with the theme 'Pedal for the Planet.'.

Rajesh Kumar said to reduce the carbon footprint, the circle is participating in enhancing generation of renewable energy and increase carbon offsetting. It is the bank's aspiration to lead India in Climate finance - with a pathway to net zero emissions by 2055 i.e., the centenary year of SBI formation. The bank shall reduce the carbon footprint of its operations to achieve the voluntarily envisioned goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

Rajesh Kumar said that, as a part of the Green Initiative towards Sustainable Development Goals, the bank's mission is to facilitate 7.5% of domestic gross advances to be green advances.



## One held for faking job offer at multinational company

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyber Crime Police have arrested an individual accused of cheating a victim by faking a job offer in a multinational company. The suspect, Binde Pavan Kalyan, was involved in Cr. No. 854/2024 U/s 66 C D of ITA Act, 419, 420 IPC of PS Cyber Crimes. Incriminating materials was seized from him.

According to the Police, the complainant, B Jagadish, a 45-year-old private employee from Hyderabad, reported the crime on 8.02.2024. Jagadish received a call from an unknown number, offering an online data entry job. Believing the offer to be genuine, he transferred Rs 2000 initially, followed by additional payments totaling Rs 5,73,208 after being misled by the suspect.

As per the information, the accused, previously running an internet cafe, posed as a consultancy manager on the LOKEL APP, luring victims with fake job offers and collecting money under false profession.



B Krishna Prasad, Managing Director of Ascendas Broadcasting Pvt Ltd, and Swatantra TV, greeting Ramesh Babu Kandula, who took charge as the Chief Editor of Swatantra TV Channel on Wednesday

## Ramesh Kandula joins Swatantra TV as Chief Editor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ramesh Kandula has joined Swatantra TV Channel as Chief Editor on Wednesday. With a vast experience across the media spectrum - in print, web and television; in regional and national; and in English and Telugu - Ramesh has held leadership positions in a variety of news organizations. His previous stints include *Eenadu*, *Deccan Chronicle* and *The Tribune*. He also held senior positions in various television channels including TV5 and i-News, and served as the Chief Editor of Andhra Pradesh Magazine by the AP Government.

Ramesh has produced hundreds of news reports, news analyses, informative articles and opinion pieces for print, web and TV during his more than three decades of rich experience. He is also the author of two non-fiction books. His political biography of NT Rama Rao, '*Maverick Messiah*,' was published by Penguin Random House India. His recent book in Telugu on Amaravati, '*Amaravati Vivadalu - vasthavalu*,' is a research work on the controversies surrounding the capital.

## Muharram procession concludes peacefully

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The massive Bibi Ka Alam procession concluded peacefully in the Old City of Hyderabad on the 10th day of Muharram amid tight security and traffic arrangements by Hyderabad City Police with 2,500 officers and personnel on Wednesday.

The grand procession started with 'Alam' placed on a decorated elephant from 'Bibi Ka Alava' in Dabirpura. Thousands of mourners participated in this procession.

Chief Secretary of Telangana Shanti Kumari inspected the arrangements during the Muharram procession. Along with Hyderabad Commissioner Kota Srinivasa Reddy, she presented 'dattis' to Bibi Ka Alam. Shanti Kumari said that all kinds of arrangements provided by the government for the Moharam procession are good.

The Muharram procession passed through Darulshifa, Bada Bazaar, Charminar, Salarjung Bridge and other parts of the city and reached Masjid-e-Ilahi, Chadarghat on the banks of Musi river and ended peacefully.

# DSC exam begins today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite countless protests made by aspirants to defer the District Selection Committee (DSC) exam, the Telangana government is gearing up to hold the exam from Thursday.

The School Education department has accordingly arranged over 50 centres. Over 2,79,956 applications have been received for recruitment of 11,062 teacher vacancies via DSC. DSC examination is conducted for recruitment of teacher vacancies.

It will commence with a test for school assistant - Social Studies and Physical Science posts in Telugu medium in the morning session followed by the physical education exam in Hindi, English, Urdu, Kannada and Telugu mediums in afternoon session.

The exam will conclude with a test for school assistant and language pandit position on August 5.

Meanwhile, G Sudheer Babu, Commissioner of Police, Rachakonda, issued prohibitory orders forbidding assembly of four or more persons around 200 meters of all the examination centres of District Selection Committee (DSC)-2024 (Teacher Recruitment Test) with a view to maintain public order and peace and to prevent obstruction of any lawfully employed person or causing disturbance of public tranquility in the areas covered by certain police stations in the limits of Rachakonda Commissionerate,.

The exam will be conducted through Online Computer-Based Test (CBT) scheduled to be held from July 18 to August 5.

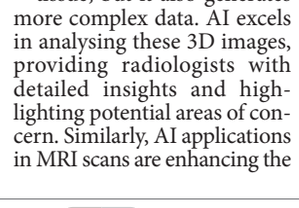
The order will remain in force from 6 am of July 18 to 6 pm of August 5 at all the examination centres. Police officers on duty, military personnel on duty, home guards on duty , flying squad of the educational department on duty and bonafide funeral processions are exempted from the operation of this order.

The public are hereby informed that any person violating the orders shall be liable for prosecution under Section 163 of BNSS.

'MESSING' UP IN JNTU HOSTELS

# Food verification panel cites lack of hygiene in hostels

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Following the viral circulation of cat eating mess food, JNTUH, Kukatpally authorities have warned that strict action will be taken against those who are responsible for it. The university staff suspected that some people might have done this for social media campaigns.

Principal Narsimha Reddy, who took up the inquiry into this incident, said, "Complaints have been received that some students have been deliberately made to advertise on social media with malicious intent.

The mess staff is expressing doubts about posting on social media without telling the warden or to the college principal. We will look into them and take strict action against those responsible."

However, the students along with the netizens demanded food safety officials to inspect the varsity. Following the vido circulation, the Kukatpally Government Food Verification Committee immediately visited the varsity and inspected the messes and hostels.

As per the Food Verification Committee officials, " During the inspection, we have noticed that the messes and canteens in the hostels lack proper hygienic measures. Hence, these kinds of incidents happen regularly. We will soon implement proper measures in the messes after submitting the inspection reports to the higher authorities (Commissioner and the Ministry)."

## BRS complains against use of KCR's words in item song

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leaders, M Rajitha Reddy and Garrepalli Satish, filed a complaint at LB Nagar with regards to the use of former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao's voice in an item song in the upcoming film Double Ismart on Wednesday.

Rajitha Reddy said, "In the recently released item song of director Puri Jagannath's movie *Double Smart*, the words used by former chief minister KCR have been used as a hook line and hurt the sentiments of the entire Telangana people.

# Hyd next in tally for PE investment in real estate

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Hyderabad is next in tally for Private equity (PE) investment in real estate. The PE investments totaling US$ 3 billion have been made in Indian real estate in the first half of 2024, recorded a 15% increase from US$ 2.6 bn in H1 2023. In its latest report, "Trends in private equity investment in India: H1 2024," Knight Frank India, noted a shift in investor dynamics and sectoral preferences for PE investments into Indian real estate.

The report shows that office sector, which received the highest share of PE investments since 2018, was surpassed by the warehousing sector, which became the most popular, attracting more investment than the combined totals of the office, retail, and residential sectors.

According to the report, the warehousing sector accounted for the largest share of 52% of total PE investments in January -June 2024, followed by residential with 29% and 20% in office sector . PE investments in the residential sector also saw a significant increase of over 209% to USD 854 million in H1 2024 from USD 277 mn in H1 2023.

Knight Frank also shows that Hyderabad received about 12% of PE investments in the country, recorded at US$ 357 mn in H1 2024. About 74% of PE investments in the city were deployed in the office sector, amounting to US$ 265 mn made by an Asian PE investor. The remaining investments were in the residential sector, recorded at US$ 92 mn from domestic investors.

The residential sector attracted an investment of US$ 854 mn in H1 2024, marking a 209% increase. Geographically, investments in the residential sector were spread across India, with Hyderabad standing at US$ 92 mn, Bengaluru leading with US$ 403 mn, followed by Mumbai with US$ 201 mn, and Delhi-NCR with US$ 97 mn. This distribution of investment highlights the nationwide appeal and potential of the residential market.

# AI revolutionises breast cancer detection

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



With the implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the healthcare sector, AI offers unprecedented advancements in detection of critical diseases especially cancer with accuracy, efficiency and accessibility thereby saving countless lives. One of the most significant contributions of AI in breast cancer detection is its application in imaging analysis. Traditional mammography, a crucial tool for early detection, is now being augmented by AI algorithms. These algorithms, trained on vast datasets, can identify minute abnormalities in mammograms with remarkable precision. Studies have shown that AI can detect cancers that radiologists might miss, thereby reducing false negatives and ensuring early intervention.

The advent of 3D mammography, or tomosynthesis, has improved the visualisation of breast

tissue, but it also generates more complex data. AI excels in analysing these 3D images, providing radiologists with detailed insights and highlighting potential areas of concern. Similarly, AI applications in MRI scans are enhancing the detection of breast cancer, particularly in women with dense breast tissue where traditional methods may fall short. Diagnostic errors, including false positives and false negatives, have long been a challenge in breast cancer screening. AI systems help in cross-verifying diagnoses, leading to more reliable outcomes and reducing the psychological and financial burden on patients due to unnecessary biopsies. Apart from detection, it also plays a crucial role in the personalisation of breast cancer treatment. By analyzing patient data, including genetic profiles and treatment histories, it can help oncologists devise tailored treatment plans that maximize efficacy and minimize side effects. This personalised approach is revolutionising patient care, offering hope for better outcomes and improved quality of lives. In regions with limited access to medical facilities, AI-driven mobile health units equipped with portable imaging devices are making breast cancer screening more accessible. These units can perform screenings in remote areas, with AI algorithms providing immediate analysis and recommendations.

# CM moots toll-free number to address stray dog menace

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy expressed deep sorrow over the incident where a two-year-old boy was killed by stray dogs in Jawahar Nagar, Hyderabad.

He instructed officials to establish a call centre or toll-free number to receive complaints from residents in areas affected by stray dogs and to take immediate action.

He stated that the incident has deeply disturbed him and instructed officials to take measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

Given the repeated occurrences of such incidents, the Chief Minister alerted officials to take all necessary action to curb the menace of stray dogs. The Chief Minister suggested forming an expert committee, including veterinarians and representatives from voluntary organisations like Blue Cross, to study whether the attacks by stray dogs on infants and children are due to environmental conditions or seasonal factors.

He also advised officials to consider vaccinating stray dogs or exploring methods adopted in other states.

The Chief Minister ordered the medical and health department to ensure that all urban health centres within GHMC limits, and all primary health centres and hospitals across the State, have the necessary medicines readily available in case of dog attacks.

# We will not rest until turncoat MLAs are disqualified: Harish

PNS ■ MEDAK



Former minister T Harish Rao speaking at a media conference in Medak on Wednesday

Former Minister and Siddipet MLA T Harish Rao has said that the BRS would not rest untill the BRS MLAs, who crossed over to the ruling Congress Party, will become the former MLAs. The BRS would go to Supreme Court, if need arose. He predicted that the constituencies represented by the BRS turncoat MLAs will soon go to by-elections.

Addressing media after holding the party workers' meeting here on Wednesday in the wake of the Pathancheru MLA Gudem Mahipal Reddy quitting the BRS to join the Congress, Harish Rao pointed out that KCR launched the movement for Telangana with a handful of leaders in 2001. Conspiracies were hatched against the TRS (now BRS) even then. When YS Rajasekhar Reddy was Chief Minister, as many as 12 BRS MLAs switched their allegiance to the Congress. But the conspiracies did not work. The justice triumphed at last. KCR fought for Telangana state for 14 years and achieved the statehood. Despite doomsayers, the BRS flourished and captured power twice. He came down heavily on Mahipal Reddy for deserted the party though the party gave an opportunity to contest from Patancheru thrice successfully. Whenever elections were held in Telangana, the BRS wrest the constituency.

"I came here to boost your (party activists) confidence. The party activists attended the party meeting in thousand and boosted my confidence," Harish Rao said.

Revanth Reddy, who gave a call to the Congress cadres to stone all 12 party MLAs who defected to BRS in the past, has been visiting the homes of the BRS leaders and presenting them with Congress shawls, he pointed out. Charging the government with adopting double standards on the bonus issue to the paddy, Harish Rao pointed out that Revanth Reddy changed the tack saying that the bonus is applicable only to the fine variety of paddy. The Congress is applying the same formula to the loan waiver issue too. Then what is the use of formulating guidelines for the PM-Kisan scheme and the issue of ration cards?

The administration has come to a standstill. Salaries are not being paid on time to government employees, he said, adding that the people would be able to distinquish between milk and water.

He expressed confidence that the people would recognise the good work done by the BRS government. He exhorted the party workers to prepare for the by-polls from now onwards assuring the party support to them. Dubbaka MLA Kotha Prabhakar Reddy, former MLA Bhupal Reddy and others were present at the media conference.

## Three marijuana smugglers arrested

PNS ■ NALGONDA

The Nalgonda police arrested three persons on smuggling marijuana. Police said that 73.825 kg of marijuana, five mobile phones and a car were seized from the arrested persons.

Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, Nalgonda DSP Sivarama Reddy said that the police conducted vehicle checks at the Korlapadu check-post after receiving information. The police stopped a suspicious car and found marijuana worth around Rs 18,45,625. The arrested have been identified as Ashok Kumar, Deepu Kumar and Sushma Rai.

## Loan waiver: Komatireddy to attend farmers' celebration today

PNS ■ NALGONDA



District Collector C Narayana Reddy said that as part of the farmer loan waiver celebrations will be held at Rythu Vedikas. Farmers who benefited by loan waiver will participate in celebrations.

The Collector held a a teleconference with the Joint Director of the District Agriculture Department and the Mandal Agriculture Officers.

He said that the State government has announced farm loan waiver up to Rs 2 lakh. Loans up to Rs 1 lakh would be waived Thursday. The Collector said that the farmers who got the loan waiver would participate in celebrations at Rythu Vedikas from 2 pm to 4 pm on Thursday. The Collector directed the officials to erect LED screens and make other necessary arrangements

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, MLAs, MPs and other public representatives will attend the celebrations at MNR function hall in Nalgonda. He said that the farmers would reach the MNR function hall in a rally at 2 pm. The Chief Minister would talk to a few farmers through video conference at 4 pm. He directed the District Agriculture Officer to make proper arrangements at all the farmers' venues in the district as well as in the MNR function hall. He said that about 200 farmers from each mandal would participate in the celebrations at Rythu Vedikas.

District Agriculture Officer Sravan and zonal agriculture officers attended the teleconference.

## Justice Narasimha Reddy comments amount to contempt of court: BRS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



BRS leader Manne Krishank speaking at a media conference at Telangana Bhavan in Hyderabad on Wednesday

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader Manne Krishank strongly condemned Justice L Narasimha Reddy following his "inappropriate comments" about the Supreme Court's decision to remove him as Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry probing power purchase agreements.

In a press meet at Telangana Bhavan on Wednesday, he questioned how Justice Narasimha Reddy, a former High Court judge, could criticise the court's decisions, highlighting this as an act of contempt. Krishank called for action against Justice Narasimha Reddy under Article 142 of the Constitution for his comments against the Supreme Court's judgment.

Krishank welcomed the Supreme Court Chief Justice Chandrachud's order to remove Narasimha Reddy and noted that former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao had responded to the Commission of Inquiry without mentioning any personal matters about Justice Narasimha Reddy. He criticised Justice Narasimha Reddy for openly questioning KCR's decisions, which led to his removal by the Supreme Court. "Even after his removal, Justice Narasimha Reddy continued to make inappropriate comments about KCR, demonstrating contempt of court", He said

Krishank condemned Justice Narasimha Reddy's remarks about KCR and MLC Kavitha, pointing out the inconsistency in Justice Narasimha Reddy's claims that a report was ready while alleging KCR had not responded. This, Krishank argued, shows "Justice Narasimha Reddy's malicious intentions".

Krishank emphasized that Narasimha Reddy prematurely labeled Kavitha as guilty while she is still under investigation, stressing that no one is guilty until proven so. He also mentioned Narasimha Reddy's remarks about Justice Ghose, who is investigating Kaleshwaram, and demanded action on that as well.

Highlighting that Congress leaders have protested against Narasimha Reddy's alleged land grabs, Krishank questioned why Congress appointed him as Chairman of the Inquiry Commission. He also revealed Narasimha Reddy's RSS roots and questioned Asaduddin Owaisi's silence on his appointment.

Krishank dismissed false news about KTR and Harish Rao visiting Delhi for consultations with BJP, stating they went to discuss court cases, not political alliances. He accused Narasimha Reddy of reading from Revanth Reddy's script and demanded Revanth apologize for appointing Narasimha Reddy as Chairman.

Krishank refuted allegations of a BRS-BJP alliance, stating that if such an alliance existed, Kavitha would not be facing jail time. He asserted that KCR is not accountable to Owaisi and that the BRS-BJP alliance rumors are baseless. Krishank urged the media to avoid giving importance to unnecessary rumors and advised Owaisi not to seek explanations from BRS based on media reports.

## MLA provides aid to bereaved families

PNS ■ MEDAK

Local legislator Mynampalli Rohit on Wednesday visited the bereaved families of four persons who were killed in a road accident recently in Bacharam village of Papannapetamandal of Medak constituency.

He presented Rs 25,000 each to the kin of the bereaved family. Later, he extended a financial assistance of Rs 10,000 to the next of kin of Congress activist KarrollaVithal, who died of ill-health recently.

Later addressing the media, Mynampalli Rohit said that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy will waive crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh. The Chief Minister is going to waive Rs 1 lakh immediately on Thursday. Therefore, he demanded that former minister and Siddipet MLA T Harish Rao to resign as farm loan waiver is being implemented.

## Violence breaks out at residential school; 3 injured

PNS ■ TOOPRAN




In a rare incident of violence at a residential school hostel at Allapur under Toopran mandal in Medak district, three students were injured, one of them seriously, on Tuesday night, according to reports reaching on Wednesday.

The incident showed the lack of discipline at the residential school.

According to reports, Intermediate senior students of residential school hostel assaulted junior Intermediate and SSC students on Tuesday night after dinner with sticks, buckets and suitcases inflicting severe injuries on a junior Inter student and minor injuries to two others. What caused trouble is yet to be known. In fact, there was no such precedent in the school in the past. What triggered the clash between the seniors and juniors was not known.

The seriously injured was identified as Rakesh. Others who sustained minor injuries in the incident were Shanmukh and Anil. The seriously injured was rushed to Government Hospital at Toopran for treatment.

According to reports, Intermediate second year students went to the room of the Inter first year and SSC students' room in the hostel on Tuesday night after dinner. There ensued an exchange of words between seniors and the juniors leading to violence. One of them sustained serious injuries needing immediate hospitalisation.

The college management and the police have been probing into the violence on the campus.

## Mittapalli residents' protest over road width

PNS ■ MITTAPALLI

The displaced persons of the rail road project on staged a protest in front of the village panchayat demanding that the authorities o conform to the revised measurement with regard to the width of the four-lane road and length of the road bridge to be built as part of the project.

One of the protestors Santosh Srinivas alleged that the officials have revised the width of the road to 150 feet from 100 feet and the length of the road bridge to 600 meters from 300 meters.

In the event of increasing the road width to 150 feet, the DPs would complain that the officials would have to demolish 35-40 houses of his fellow protestors as they built their houses predicting that the width of the road would be only 100 feet. Also, several persons would have to lose their sites close to the road.

They said that they lost their lands to the rail road project and built homes in Mittapalli. If the widening of the Mittapalli road project were to affect their home again, they would have no option except to commit suicide.

They appealed to the state and central government officials to respond and render justice to them. They alleged that the officials concerned have failed to furnish information to them on time.

## Niranjan demands unconditional farm loan waiver

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Former minister S Niranjan Reddy speaking at a media conference in Hyderabad on Wednesday

Former minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy demanded that the government waive farmers' loans without any conditions and implement the Rythu Bharosa scheme to support the farming community.

In a press meet held at Telangana Bhavan, he emphasised that there should be no restrictions on loan waivers and accused the government of imposing unnecessary restrictions to reduce the number of eligible farmers.

Niranjan Reddy criticised the government orders on loan waiver as flawed and claimed that despite the Chief Minister's assurances, the guidelines have not been changed. He accused the government of coming to power with false promises and now burdening farmers with debts and interests. The former minister highlighted that even Chandrababu Naidu, who opposed the formation of Telangana till the last moment, acknowledged that Telangana has grown to have the highest per capita income in the country in the last 10 years. He pointed out that there are 60 lakh farmers with bank accounts in the state, but only 11 lakh are being promised loan waivers, questioning the fate of the remaining 49 lakh farmers.

He criticised the use of ration cards as a criterion for identifying farmers, questioning the status of those without ration cards. He accused the government of wanting to create a show by helping a few farmers and stressed that no classification or restrictions should be imposed when it comes to aiding farmers. He demanded clarity on the status of loans left by the previous government and insisted that all loans up to Rs. 2 lakh should be waived unconditionally.

Niranjan Reddy questioned the rationale behind stopping the Rythu Bharosa scheme while continuing with loan waivers, suggesting that the same criteria should apply to both. He demanded that the government to reveal the number of farmers with loans up to Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 2 lakh and criticized the current administration for shifting funds from Rythu Bharosa to loan waivers.

He also pointed out that the government had promised to waive Rs. 40,000 crore initially, later reducing it to Rs. 31,000 crore. He called for an unconditional loan waiver using the Pattadar passbook as the standard and emphasized that the previous government had waived Rs. 29,000 crore in loans in two phases without any restrictions.

## Delhi Police arrest man for looting 4 kg gold from jeweller in Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Delhi Police arrested a man, who along with his associates, looted four kilograms of gold from a jeweller in Telangana and shot at two people during the robbery, officials said on Wednesday.

Sumit Dagar was declared a proclaimed offender in a murder case in Delhi after he did not surrender before the court on March 30, 2022, they said. On March 1, 2019, Dagar and his four associates killed Imran in Delhi over an old rivalry, police said.

"After killing Imran, he was arrested and granted parole. After getting parole, he went to Telangana where he lived with his relatives and got involved in a robbery case," Deputy Commissioner of Police (crime) Amit Goel said. "On December 1, 2023, accused Dagar, along with his associates robbed four kilograms of gold and cash from a jewellery store in Telangana at gunpoint," the DCP said.

Dagar opened fire at the staff, and two other jewellers received bullet injuries, he said. "At that time, Telangana police sought assistance from the crime branch of the Delhi Police to trace the accused persons as it was revealed that the accused were from Delhi," the DCP said.

"Many teams were formed to nab the accused in both cases. Teams identified his location in Sector 34 in Rohini and apprehended him on Tuesday. Dagar later accepted his involvement," DCP said.

Dagar was involved in six cases, including murder and armed robbery in Delhi and Telangana. Efforts are being made to arrest his associates as well, he added.

## Cyber Crime Police prevent frauds involving Rs 28.07 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyber Crime police station of Hyderabad Police Commissionerate has saved Rs 28.07 lakh of cyber victims in four incidents on Monday and Tuesday.

Victims lost a total amount of Rs 37,32,900 out of which Rs 28,07,085 was frozen in the fraudsters bank accounts immediately by the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) team of Hyderabad Cyber Crime police station.

On Tuesday, a person approached the Cyber Crime police station related to the installation of APK-based KYC fraud. The victim lost Rs 2 lakh from his bank. They responded immediately to the victim on his approach to the police station and registered the complaint online in the NCRP portal and escalated with the victim's bank and to the suspect bank who responded and blocked the transaction for an amount of Rs 1,75,185 in the fraudsters bank account.

In another case, a person lost Rs 5.90 lakh related to TRAI/Mumbai Police fraud from his bank. When the victim approached the police station on Tuesday, police registered the complaint and blocked the transaction for an amount of Rs 4.73 lakh in the fraudster's bank.

In another case, a TRAI/Mumbai police fraud, the victim lost Rs 20.08 lakh, when the victim responded immediately and approached the police on Tuesday blocked the transaction for an amount of Rs 20.08 lakh in the fraudster's bank account.

In another case, on Monday a person approached the Cyber Crime police station, Hyderabad City through NCRP portal related to investment fraud, after she lost Rs 9.40 lakh from her bank. After registering the complaint online in the NCRP portal, the police blocked Rs 1.50 lakh in the fraudster's account.

## Marijuana chocolates seized from shop in Jagadgirigutta

PNS ■ JAGADGIRIGUTTA

A police SOT of Balanagar and Jagadgirigutta police jointly conducted a raid on a provisional store titled Aryan Gosami, being run by Sunita Devi of Bihar in Jagadgirigutta and recovered 9.3-kg marijuana chocolates.

It may be recalled that the Revanth Reddy government has declared war against drugs in the state.

Sunita Devi had been allegedly selling ganja chocolates and selling them to the local youth and workers. The police conducted joint raid on a tip off.

The police noticed that the chocolates were made in UP and the chocolate wrapper carried the address Sadguru Ayurveda Pharmacy, K-16, Industrial Area, Ramnagar, Chadouli. The police sent her to remand.

Three months ago, the police seized 6,400 marijuana chocolates, weighing 26 kg, from the same area from a provisional store run with the name Jayasri Traders. The total value of the ganja chocolates seized was put at Rs 2.66 lakh. Then cases were registered under NDPS against Manoj Kumar of Kolkata and local trader Mohan.

## Two SCCL workers killed as earth caves in on them

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI





Two SCCL workers were killed as chunks of earth caved in on them from the roof of the opencast mine in Ramagundam region while they were working in the mine on Wednesday evening. However, two others survived the accident with minor injuries.

The incident left the people of coal blet area in a state of severe shock. Of late, accidents in coal mines were unheard of. But the Wednesday's incident has become a huge cause of concern for the people of the area. Several have been blaming the negligence on the part of the coal workers for the mishap. The deceased were identified as UppuVenkateswarlu, fitter, and Vidyasagar, a geneal mazdoor. The injured were identified as Sammaiah and Raju.

The incident took place, when they were undertaking repairs to water pipeline in OCP-2 of the RG-3 of the SCCL.

The duo were killed on the spot as earth caved on them all of a sudden. The bodies were shifted to Singareni Hospital in Godavarikhani area. Trade union leaders, who are angry over the incident, blame it on the official negligence and demand a thorough inquiry into the incident leading to death of two coal workers.

HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JULY 18, 2024

the pioneer

Opinion 06

www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

# A new lease of life

## The Govt reconstitutes NITI Aayog, inducts union ministers and NDA allies to enhance strategic planning

In a significant move to bolster its policy-making prowess, the Indian Government has reconstituted the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog. This reconstitution includes 15 Union Ministers and notable allies from the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), marking a strategic shift in the country's planning and development framework. This underscores the Government's commitment to integrating diverse ministerial insights into the policy-making process. These ministers come from various portfolios, ensuring that a broad spectrum of expertise and perspectives is brought to the table. This comprehensive approach aims to address multifaceted national challenges more effectively. The reconstitution also sees the induction of key NDA allies, signalling a collaborative effort to drive the nation's development agenda. By involving NDA allies, the Government aims to foster a more inclusive and cooperative environment within the Aayog. Among the notable ministers included are Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh. Their presence is anticipated to significantly influence the economic, internal security, and defence policies of the country. The inclusion of ministers from portfolios such as Health, Education, and Rural Development indicates a holistic approach to addressing India's development needs.




This reconstitution is seen as a strategic shift from the traditional Planning Commission model to a more dynamic and inclusive NITI Aayog framework. It reflects the government's intention to leverage the collective wisdom of its senior ministers and allies to drive forward its vision of a 'New India'. The Aayog's reconstitution aims to facilitate better coordination between the central and state governments, ensuring that policies are effectively implemented at the grassroots level. One of the primary goals of this reconstitution is to enhance the implementation of policies. The government hopes to streamline the execution of key initiatives and programs. This is expected to result in more efficient policy delivery and improved outcomes on the ground. NITI Aayog was established on January 1, 2015, as a replacement for the Planning Commission. Its primary purpose is to promote cooperative federalism by involving state governments in the policymaking process. However gradually it lost its importance. The Indian government has increasingly favoured a centralised approach, leading to reduced involvement of states in planning and decision-making processes, undermining NITI Aayog's role. It lacks financial powers and direct allocation of funds, limiting its influence on actual policy implementation. Besides, there has been a tendency to prioritize immediate economic and political goals over long-term strategic planning, diminishing NITI Aayog's relevance in sustainable development. As the NITI Aayog embarks on this new phase, there is a sense of optimism about its potential to drive substantial progress. It is anticipated that the Government's latest move will lead to more robust policy frameworks.

## PICTALK



Shia mourners participate in the 9th Muharram procession, on boats, at Dal Lake, in Srinagar PTI

# Parliament: Duty over disruption



PRAFULL **GORADIA**

## The opposition can leverage parliament debates to engage with their constituencies but they often waste this opportunity by walkouts and protests



It is difficult to understand, especially since parliamentarians, appeared to overlook an essential of their vocation. That is, that the legislature usually does not take much time. The rest of the session is the opportunity for the opposition to demonstrate their talent and commitment through television. The ruling party or parties do not need the legislature except to have bills passed and enacted into law. If there are no laws that need to be passed urgently, the government and ruling party can do without the legislature virtually for an entire year. Of course, there remains the presenting and passing of the Budget, which can be legitimized only by the legislature, particularly the Lok Sabha.

What has been stated hitherto has been well demonstrated by the state assemblies in India. They pass the odd bill once in a while, and the annual budget is the other essential item of business during the year. Most state legislative assemblies meet for three or four days at a time. Otherwise, for the few times they have to statutorily meet, each session is seldom for more than three or four days. However, the members of the legislative assemblies (MLAs) draw their pay and perks for the entire term of the legislative body.

This applies to Parliament too, although it has the budget, monsoon and winter sessions, which are long enough.In short, to restate, most of the time the legislatures can work for the benefit of the opposition members, who can display their skills, knowledge, familiarity and touch with their constituencies. With the advent of full-time coverage by television channels—Sansad TV being a prominent one—a great advantage has fallen into the hands of the Opposition. This is a boon for them; it is a free and constant medium to, as it were, communicate with their constituencies.

This institution was introduced around the time I was in Parliament. Back then, most Members who spoke made full use of the television channels by speaking for as long as possible. During the question hour between 11 am and 12 pm, only five or six questions and their answers could be completed, instead of all twenty. The reason was that those who had asked the questions spent as long a time as possible over asking their supplementary question, which was a privilege to the Member(s).

The ruling party/parties have a better opportunity of exposure than opposition parties generally get. Yet, the opposition mindlessly throws away a lot of the session time by walking out, protesting otherwise, compelling the Speaker to adjourn the House for several hours or even the rest of the day. July 2 was another example when the Prime Minister rose to thank the President for her inaugural speech. For well over two hours, groups of opposition members took turns shouting slogans in an attempt to drown the Prime Minister's address to Parliament, or perhaps even to prevent him from speaking. Little do they realize that most television channels were telecasting his speech live, duly cutting out the sloganeering.

> THE OPPOSITION MINDLESSLY THROWS AWAY A LOT OF THE SESSION TIME BY WALKING OUT, PROTESTING OTHERWISE, COMPELLING THE SPEAKER TO ADJOURN THE HOUSE FOR SEVERAL HOURS OR EVEN THE REST OF THE DAY

The only people who could hear the PM's speech being disturbed by slogans were the Members of the Lok Sabha. All that the slogan-shouting Members gained was a reputation of being wasters, as members who cost the taxpayer a lot, merely to put in negative effort to try and prevent the Prime Minister from being heard.Each session and day of Parliament cost several crores of rupees. Each Member of Parliament costs several lakh rupees a year to serve the country and its people, and not to prevent Parliament from functioning. There are many better ways of protesting, such as, such as wearing black bends on one's sleeves, sometimes wearing black caps, or sometimes, dressed fully in black. Members can also refuse to take their seats for the entire day, instead, occupying the adjacent aisles for the duration of the session, as a mark of protest, but let the work go on. This would assure all the people, including their constituents that they are spending money on the functioning of Parliament with its thousands of employees constructively and in the interests of the nation.

They should realize that the British departed from India long ago, and such negative activities have no place in our country anymore. Let it be borne in mind that being elected to Parliament (or the state legislative assemblies) is a national duty more than the privilege it has come to be mistakenly understood. What we have witnessed over the two days of July 2 and 3 portends ill for the institution of democracy, which everyone, from the opposition parties to the media and academia, not to forget their cheerleaders overseas, keeps shouting is "under threat in India". But where is the real threat to democracy coming from? This needs to be clearly understood.No democracy can be threatened because its electorate gives a clear mandate for stable governance for a developed economy and a better future. It is the cavalier fashion in which certain parties—and political families living in a sense of entitlement—treat Parliament and its protocols and rules that are emerging as the real threat to democracy.

*(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)*

# Defying the Western pressure, India prioritises national interests



K S **TOMAR**

## Prime Minister Modi's visit to Moscow highlights significant gains for India on strategic, economic, and diplomatic fronts, despite Western reservations

Despite a concerted campaign by the US and Western countries to isolate Russia following its 2022 invasion of Ukraine, several nations, including India, have prioritized their national interests. This has allowed President Putin to bolster Russia's economy, with India's $65 billion worth of crude oil imports playing a crucial role in mitigating the impact of US-imposed sanctions.



India maintains close strategic ties with the United States, yet it has become the second-largest importer of Russian crude oil after China. This alignment with Russia serves as a counterbalance to US influence. In recognition of this support, President Putin awarded Prime Minister Modi the Order of St. Andrew.

The US, as expected, reacted by urging India to ensure that any resolution to the Ukraine conflict respects the UN charter and Ukraine's territorial integrity. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller emphasised the importance of these principles in international engagements with Russia.

In this context, experts view Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Moscow through multiple lenses, highlighting significant gains for India on strategic, economic, and diplomatic fronts:

India's geopolitical strategy significantly revolves around balancing China's rising influence. Strengthening ties with Russia serves as a counterbalance to China's aggressive posturing in the region. The visit underscored mutual interests in ensuring a multipolar world order, acting as a strategic buffer against unilateral actions by any major power, including China.

**Strategic Gains:**

A key highlight of Modi's visit was the reinforcement of India-Russia defense ties. Historically, Russia has been one of India's most reliable defense partners. Discussions around the S-400 missile defense system and potential future collaborations in defense technology were central to the visit, enhancing India's military capabilities and contributing to regional stability.

Western sanctions against Russia have led it to seek stronger ties with non-Western countries, including India. Both India and Russia advocate for a multipolar world order, balancing US influence. Modi's visit reflects India's independent foreign policy, maintaining strong ties with both the US and Russia.

Energy security is a cornerstone of India's economic policy, and Russia plays a critical role with its vast oil and natural gas reserves. Modi's visit focused on long-term supply agreements, investments in energy infrastructure, and collaboration in nuclear energy projects, ensuring a stable and diversified energy supply for India. Boosting bilateral trade and investment was another focal point. Despite historical ties, trade volumes between India and Russia have not reached their full potential. The visit aimed to address this by exploring new trade avenues in sectors like pharmaceuticals, information technology, and agriculture, promising long-term benefits for both economies.

Modi's visit signifies a reaffirmation of traditional alliances. Reinforcing ties with Russia offers India a more balanced foreign policy amidst the US's increasingly transactional approach. The visit likely included discussions on expanding cooperation in space exploration and nuclear technology, fostering innovations that benefit both nations. Cybersecurity is crucial in the digital age. Modi's visit likely explored collaboration in these fields, ensuring both nations can safeguard their digital infrastructures and harness economic benefits.

*(Writer is a political analyst; views expressed are personal)*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### RBI'S NEW GUIDELINES FOR BANKS

Madam — According to a report, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated that banks cannot label borrowers as frauds without giving them a hearing. Banks must now issue a 21-day show-cause notice before classifying an account as fraudulent. This decision follows a Supreme Court order. The RBI has instructed banks to develop a fraud risk management policy, approved by at least three board members, including one full-time director and two independent or non-executive directors, to ensure compliance with the principles of natural justice. Additionally, banks are required to update their Early Warning Signal (EWS) systems within six months, integrating data analytics to detect unusual patterns.The RBI has set a threshold of Rs. 1 crore for reporting frauds to the state police, with private banks also reporting to the Serious Fraud Investigation Office and the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, while public sector banks report frauds above Rs. 6 crore to the CBI, as usual.

In consortium lending, if separate offenses are committed, each member may file separate complaints; otherwise, one member can file a complaint with support from the others.In summary, the new RBI rule mandating a 21-day notice before classifying borrowers as frauds enhances borrowers' rights by allowing them to present their cases and defend against allegations, ensuring fair treatment. This rule will improve transparency, foster trust between borrowers and financial institutions, strengthen governance through board-approved risk management policies, and regulate and streamline the processes of borrowing and lending.

**Bhagwan Thadani**| *Mumbai*

### THE PLIGHT OF GIG WORKERS

Madam — This letter addresses the plight of gig workers in our country. Gig workers are a pitiable lot. Regardless of the weather, they must fulfill their customers' demands.

I used to wonder how much they earn by zipping and zapping on their bikes, risking their lives in India's urban jungle. My curiosity was answered when I saw a delivery boy working on a rainy day. The bags on his bike were covered with a plastic sheet, but he was drenched to the bone. Since then, I have made it a point to order via the "Cash on Delivery" mode, so that I can tip gig workers generously. Surprisingly, most of the time my tip is politely declined ("Arre sir, yeh to humara kaam hai") or accepted with reluctant embarrassment.

**Avinash Godboley** |*Dewas*

### STRENGTHENING INDIA-NEPAL RELATIONS

Madam — In the neighboring country of Nepal, which borders India to the east, west, and south, KP Sharma Oli's appointment as Prime Minister was met with congratulations from PM Modi. India and Nepal have shared a deep bilateral relationship since early days, but the abolition of the monarchy in 2008 introduced challenges.

Enhancing trade, investment, and infrastructure development can provide mutual economic benefits. Joint ventures in hydropower projects and tourism can foster economic interdependence. Promoting cultural and educational exchanges can strengthen people-to-people connections, building a stronger foundation for bilateral ties. Short-sighted and selfish politicians sought to please China, which exploited the situation.

The Modi government must provide aid to Nepal and invigorate the relationship more than ever before, ensuring that Nepal does not feel the need to turn towards China, which would harm India's interests. India must infuse new energy into its relationship with Nepal, ensuring that both nations work together for mutual growth and regional stability,

**Jakir Hussain** | *Kanpur*

## Defeating global warming



A well-defined quadrilateral encompassing solar, wind, green hydrogen, and nuclear clean energies as its four vertices is essential to effectively combat global warming and related weather catastrophes, which lead to loss of lives, assets, and properties."Well-defined" means urgently establishing both global and national annual targets for each of the four clean energy sources. What percentage should be allocated to solar energy? What percentage should be allocated to nuclear energy? And similarly, for wind and green hydrogen?

Currently, the world lacks direction, resulting in slow progress towards achieving 100% clean energy and 0% carbon emissions. The "greater capacity" and "economic power" of nuclear energy, compared to the other three clean energies, cannot be ignored. Increasing the capacity of existing nuclear reactors is more economical than constructing new ones.It would be much better and safer if all nations signed a pact to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes, such as generating clean energy and electricity, rather than for making bombs, weapons, and war paraphernalia.

**PV Madhu Nivriti**| *Secunderabad*

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JULY 18, 2024

the pioneer

analysis 07

www.dailypioneer.com facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

FIRST COLUMN

## TAKE THINGS AS THEY COME

Accepting events as they happen brings a great sense of calmness



RAVI **VALLURI**

Aeons ago in ancient China lived an old farmer who worked on his land for several years. One day his horse ran away. Upon hearing the news, a group of neighbours came to commiserate with him. "Such misfortune," the agitated group of villagers reacted. "Maybe," the farmer replied nonchalantly. A few days later the horse returned, accompanied by three wild horses. Another group of villagers approached the house of the agriculturist to sympathise. "Maybe," replied the aged farmer.

The following day, the farmer's son tried to mount one of the untamed horses and was thrown off. The strapping youngster broke his leg. The overwrought neighbours once again queued up to offer their sympathies at this misadventure. "Maybe," was the desultory answer yet again.A few days later some military personnel swooped on the village to draft young men. Looking at the incapacitated stripling, he was disqualified from being recruited. The exuberant neighbours congratulated the old grazier on the turn of events. "Maybe," was the laconic reply yet again. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has succinctly elucidated the significance of the aphorism, 'to accept people and situations as they are' in his teachings.

**The 4 Ds of Abnormal Behaviour**

Abnormal behaviour can be construed as behaviour that is disturbing (socially unacceptable), distressing, maladaptive (or self-defeating) and often the result of distorted thoughts (cognitions) as per Wikipedia.There are four strains in this abnormal behaviour. These are deviance, dysfunction, distress, and danger.Deviant behaviour is usually different, extreme, and unusual and could even include bizarre behavioural patterns.The second in the series is distressing behaviour.

People who are related to such individuals feel unpleasant and unsettled in their presence. Dysfunctional behaviour discommodes the patient to such an extent that it acts as a deterrent in his day-to-day functioning and behaviour and interferes with his range of activities. Five specific patterns of anxiety disorders fall into this category. The first is termed General Anxiety Disorder. This is a prolonged, vague, quite inexplicable fear having no objective basis, accompanied by hypervigilance, and attached motor tension of the brain. Next is what in quotidian parlance



is called panic disorder. These are none other than perpetual and frequent anxiety attacks which are accompanied by psychological symptoms such as breathlessness, palpitations, a trembling feeling, dizziness and even a sense of total loss of control over the self.

Next in the line of mental disorders are phobias. Humans have irrational phobias such as Acrophobia (fear of heights), Glossophobia (fear of addressing an audience), Claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces), and Aviophobia (fear of flying). In such situations, a human being is preoccupied with a wide range of thoughts, which are normally irrational.

Last, but no less distressing – on this ill-fated checklist is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These individuals suffer repeated and recurrent nightmares, flashbacks, impaired concentration, and emotional numbing which invariably follows traumatic or stressful events.Our country is plagued by three major issues namely, addictions, women's issues, and psychological disorders. Generally, citizens approach tantriks, babas, and quacks hoping for a miraculous cure. It is paramount to meet a qualified medical practitioner. The first step to recovery is medication under the expert guidance of a doctor.Next, after a period of treatment, it would be prudent to contact self-help groups, which sustain the treatment. For instance, undergoing the Happiness Course of the Art of Living, where one learns the Sudarshan Kriya breathing technique which harmonises the body and thought. "No matter how hard the past, you can always begin again," said Gautama Buddha.

*(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)*

# Focus on employment, innovation and skill



DINESH **SOOD**

## The Union Budget 2024 must factor in rising unemployment and need for innovation for boosting the economy and sustaining economic growth



The upcoming Union Budget on July 23 will shed light on initiatives that may reshape economic priorities under the Modi3.0 government. Amid various expectations and commitments, the government's focus on skills, employment, and innovation emerges as a key strategy in addressing current challenges and shaping future opportunities. The decision to rename the Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development to include livelihood emphasizes a shift to provide employable skills to the most vulnerable 67 per cent of the country's underprivileged population.

Placing skill development ahead of employment underscores a proactive approach to addressing the issue of a shortage of skilled workforce, especially in the health & wellness, manufacturing, and technology sectors. This not only recognizes the immediate need for a trained workforce but also positions skill development as a key driver for sustainable employment generation.

As the Budget approaches, stakeholders across sectors eagerly await concrete measures that go beyond mere promises and lead to tangible outcomes. The effectiveness of these initiatives in translating into job creation, technological innovation, and sustainable economic growth will be carefully scrutinized.

The government's steadfast commitment to enhancing skills holds the promise of unleashing India's potential as a global economic powerhouse in the years ahead.

The rebranding and revitalization of the 15-year-old National Skill Development Mission (NSDM) as the Skill India Mission under PM Narendra Modi has sparked concerns about the effectiveness of the ambitious Skill India program. This program has received support from two governments over 15 years — first the UPA and then the NDA. India is in the midst of an urgent unemployment crisis due to an employment deficit. Issues such as the delayed implementation of PMKVY 3.0 and lack of placement support are exacerbating this problem. The latest data underlines the severity of India's unemployment crisis, making it crucial to prioritize employment generation to confront the challenges facing the Indian economy, especially with a significant number of young people entering the working age each month.

> SKILL INDIA WAS DESIGNED TO ATTRACT UNSKILLED YOUNG PEOPLE AND EQUIP THEM FOR THE JOB MARKET, BUT UNEMPLOYMENT RATES REMAIN HIGH

In July 2015, PM Modi stated that "Skill India aims to build self-confidence among the underprivileged, rather than just providing jobs". However, nearly a decade later, the youth's interest in the program seems to be waning. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has implemented strict attendance monitoring and centralized student information. Unfortunately, this has led to a decline in student retention, with many dropping out due to the rigid attendance requirements. Skill India was designed to attract unskilled young people and equip them for the job market, but unemployment rates remain high. Data from the International Labour Organization reveals that the proportion of educated unemployed individuals has risen sharply from 35.2% in 2000 to 65.7% in 2023.Established in 2014, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship absorbed the NSDC and other programs to train 300 million people by 2024. Despite partnering with various organizations and raising awareness, the programs have not been as effective as envisioned.

Experts argue that even traditional degrees do not guarantee employment, and the education system is outdated and not job-focused. Only a small percentage of candidates certified by the PMKVY program have found jobs, indicating a fundamental challenge with the current skilling initiatives.Boosting skilling programs and industry partnerships is an urgent necessity to create ongoing skilling avenues and improve employability for school dropouts, and unskilled, or semi-skilled workers who need to secure a livelihood.

Although the announcement of setting up 75 skilling e-labs for simulated learning in the 2022-23 Union Budget is a positive move, we must recognize that our problem is far-reaching. API-based trusted skill credentials and discovery layers to find relevant jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities won't suffice beyond a certain point, necessitating an urgent need to skill the masses and empower the country's youths.We must acknowledge that over 40% of Indians aged 15 to 24 are neither in education, employment, or training, which is significantly higher than the South Asian (30%) and global (24%) averages. Indian firms report substantial skill shortages compared to other countries, and they assess only about 46% of graduates as employable.

The majority of students lack the necessary skills, and the skills they do possess are not aligned with the needs of their employers.Every year, more than 12 million young people in India become employable, yet we are unable to absorb them into the workforce. Many of these individuals hold higher education degrees, but they lack the necessary employable skills.

The India Skills Report (ISR) 2024 highlights that only 50.3% of graduates from higher educational institutions are deemed employable.A skill gap study conducted by the NSDC during 2010-14 indicates that by 2025, India will need nearly 109.7 million additional skilled workers across various sectors. While the government's interventions in promoting skill development are commendable, more needs to be done to bridge the skill gaps.Wish List: In the 2024-25 Union Budget, it is crucial to prioritize upskilling initiatives for gig workers, due to the eight-fold increase in young people's participation in the gig economy from 2019 to 2023, the majority of these youth come from Tier-I and Tier-II cities and rural areas.

While the government is working to make employable skills more accessible through public-private partnerships, there is a need to facilitate and incentivize the establishment of more skill development universities to steer the youth, especially undergraduates towards skills. This will help align the skill courses with global standards and significantly enhance the youth's skills, contributing to the nation's workforce development.I strongly urge a significant budget allocation to provide employable skills, particularly to school dropouts on a priority basis. This will not only empower them but also significantly contribute to the growth of the Indian economy, aiming to reach $7 trillion by 2030 and position India as the world's third-largest economy.

*(The writer is Co-Founder and MD, of Orane International, a Training Partner with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), and a Network Member of India International Skill Centres,; Views expressed are personal)*

# Kerala: Beyond the well-crafted image of a tidy, literate State

## Behind its progressive facades lies a struggle with industrial stagnation, healthcare shortcomings, and a surprising reliance on superstition



KUMAR **CHELLAPPAN**

The assumption among the people outside Kerala is that it is the most literate, intelligent and hygienic State in the country. The ruling CPI(M) leaves no stone unturned to portray it as the land of people with a scientific temper and is the numero uno in all spheres of life. There are no countries in the world where you will not find expatriate Malayalees. S K Pottekkadu, the best travel writer the State has produced in the last 150 years has written articulately about the Keralites whom he met in South Africa and Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) even in the days when there were no diplomatic ties between India and these countries.The modern-day reality of Kerala is entirely different and far from what is projected by the CPI(M). Malayalees are leaving en masse from Kerala to Europe, Australia, the USA, Canada, Latin America, Africa and of course the West Asian countries in search of livelihood and for higher studies. There are no major industries worth their names in the State other than some public sector companies like FACT, Cochin Refineries and Cochin Shipyard. Industrialists and entrepreneurs have translocated their enterprises to neighbouring States like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The claim by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his minister of health Veena George that the State is a role model in health care and well-being for the rest of the country and the world is a great joke. The chief minister boards the first available flight to the USA whenever he is afflicted with the common cold. Recently, a four-year-old girl was admitted to Government Medical College Hospital in Kozhikode for the removal of her sixth finger.

However, the doctor who performed the surgery operated on her tongue while leaving the finger untouched. Though her parents alerted the hospital authorities, the initial reaction was denial of the faux pas by the latter.

Remember, the Kozhikode Medical College and Hospital is a most sought-after institution by prospective medical students!This is not an isolated incident as such things happen quite regularly in the State's government hospitals. The doctors have their justification for such mistakes. Most of them say they are overworked and underpaid. When they work under pressure, such errors are bound to happen, claim the doctors!

The aim of this column is not to embarrass the doctors or their minister of health who was a mere news reader in one of the many TV news channels that have mushroomed in the State over the last two decades.

The recent controversy about sorcerers digging out (or mining?) copper plates, miniature artefacts and bones of some birds like hens or ducks from the residence and office of K Sudhakaran MP who is president of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee is an issue that shows the large scale obscurantism prevailing among the descendants of Jawaharlal Nehru, the wholesale dealer of scientific temper.

According to sources close to Sudhakaran, the sorcery was the handiwork of people in the party itself who wanted to see the KPCC chief remain in bed for the rest of his life.

There are black magicians across Kerala who have the "expertise" to neutralize one's enemies or help you to become a minister or even chief minister! This is not an exaggerated statement as this writer himself has spoken to a sorcerer who was into this kind of business for decades.

When Oommen Chandi was the chief minister (2011-2016), there was this Congress leader who felt left out during the formation of the UDF Government. When his efforts to become a minister failed, he approached a sorcerer from Malabar who offered the former to make him a minister and that too with a plum portfolio by performing puja. The sorcerer said that witchcraft had to be done and it would cost the politician Rs 12 lakh and the latter accepted the proposal with glee.

The magician rang up this writer and said that the puja would begin the next morning and the politician would become the minister in three months. Presto, in three months, the politician was sworn in as a minister with a coveted portfolio!The story did not end there. The sorcerer was not paid the promised money and he had to warn the politician that he had the know-how to get the minister dismissed from the government.

Last heard, the politician (nay, minister) hushed up the issue by paying half the amount he had agreed to pay earlier. Politicians cheating the electorate is quite common but hoodwinking even wizards and warlocks is new information.Sorcery and black magic are not confined to Kerala. They are a global phenomenon with even our Dravidian politicians who swear by rationalism seeking guidance from astrologers, wizards and sorcerers for survival.

Some of the countries that played in the World Cup football championship in the 1970s and 1980s used to have an official sorcerer for the team. His mission is to perform witchcraft near the rival team's goalposts to ensure that the ball enters the post without failure!

If you feel that sorcery is restricted to politics, business and sports, you are mistaken, Sir. There are many instances of it being used by scientific researchers in the US and Russia. Wait for another occasion.

*(The writer is special correspondent with the Pioneer; views expressed are personal)*

the pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JULY 18, 2024



MONEY MATTERS

## Seeds Fincap raises US$ 8.5 mn from Lok, Matrix

Non-bank lender Seeds Fincap on Wednesday said it has raised USD 8.5 million (about Rs 70 crore) in funding led by Lok Capital and Matrix Partners India. The small businesses-focused lender will be using the funds to expand lending capabilities, enhance technological infrastructure, and broaden branch footprint, as per an official statement. The Gurugram-based company provides secured and unsecured loans of up to Rs 5 lakh, it said, adding that the MSME segment is underserved by the lenders at present, which has created a credit deficit of Rs 8 lakh crore.




"Our thesis is to invest in high-quality businesses serving this segment with tailored "right-tech", contextual credit products, especially in underserved geographies like North and Central India," Matrix Partners India managing director Vikram Vaidyanathan said. The 2021-established Seeds has 90 branches in eight states.

## Industry body seeks ban on import of chlorinated gloves

Industry body Indian Rubber Gloves Manufacturers Association (IRGMA) on Wednesday urged the government to ban the import of chlorinated gloves to enhance safety in hospitals and healthcare professionals. "It is time that these spurious imports and usage of chlorinated gloves be curbed as it is detrimental to the health of both healthcare providers and patients, and for their safety the government and the authorities must make firm implementations that impede the spurious circulation and import of chlorinated gloves," IRGMA president Sunil Patwari said in a statement. IRGMA further sought that the gloves for government hospitals should be procured through GeM (Government e Marketplace) having BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) approval, which conforms to the consideration and implementation of QCO (Quality Control Order).



## Hinduja Tech to acquire Tecosim Group for 21 mn euros

Hinduja Tech Ltd, a subsidiary of commercial vehicle maker Ashok Leyland, on Wednesday said it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Germany-based Tecosim Group for 21 million euros (about Rs 190 crore). This strategic acquisition broadens Hinduja Tech's presence in the European and international markets and solidifies its position as a leading provider of mobility engineering services worldwide, the company said in a statement.



In a regulatory filing, Ashok Leyland said the transaction was carried out at an enterprise value of 21 million euros.Headquartered in Wiesbaden, Germany, the group is into the development of technological solutions that promote sustainable transport, safe and clean energy supply, and a competitive industrial landscape. Tecosim recorded a turnover of 40 million euros in 2023.

# Cabinet to soon decide on IPEF's clean, fair economy agreements

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI




The Union Cabinet will soon take a decision on the commerce ministry's proposal to seek approval for signing of 14-member IPEF (Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity) bloc's agreements on clean and fair economy, an official said.

Last month in Singapore, 13 IPEF bloc members signed these agreements, while India stated that it would ink the deals after getting domestic approval.

The official said the commerce ministry has sent both pacts to the cabinet secretariat and soon the cabinet will take it up for approval.

Agreement on a clean economy intends to accelerate efforts of IPEF partners' towards energy security and transition, climate resilience and adaptation, GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions mitigation; find/develop innovative ways of reducing dependence on fossil fuel energy; promote technical cooperation, workforce development, capacity building, and research collaborations; and collaborate to facilitate development, access, and deployment of clean energy and climate-friendly technologies.

The agreement will facilitate investments, concessional financing, joint collaborative projects, workforce development and technical assistance.

Further, the agreement on fair economy intends to create a more transparent and predictable business environment which can spur greater trade and investment in the markets of member countries; enhance efforts to prevent and combat corruption by strengthening anti-corruption frameworks, support efforts to improve tax transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes between competent authorities.

The 14-member IPEF bloc was launched jointly by the US and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region on May 23, 2022, in Tokyo.

Together, they account for 40 per cent of the world's economic output and 28 per cent of trade.

The framework is structured around four pillars relating to trade, supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy. India has joined all the pillars except the trade.

Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the US, and Vietnam are members of the bloc.

On November 14, 2023, the IPEF concluded negotiations for a clean economy, fair economy, and the overarching agreement on the IPEF for Prosperity.

These two agreements will enter into force after at least five IPEF partners complete their internal legal procedures for ratification, acceptance or approval. The block has already signed the agreement on supply chain in November 2023.




## Zydus inks licensing pact with Takeda to sell GERD drug

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

Zydus Lifesciences on Wednesday said it has inked a licensing pact with Takeda to market a drug for the treatment of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

The company has entered into a non-exclusive patent licensing agreement with Takeda Pharmaceutical Company to market the novel Potassium Competitive Acid Blocker (P-CAB) Vonoprazan in India, the drug firm said in a statement.

The drug will be marketed under the brand name Vault in the country, it added.

Under the terms of this agreement.

## 'No takers for 18 lakh jobs in financial services sector'

**PNS** ■ AHMEDABAD

A top official of the FPSB India (Financial Planning Standards Board) here on Wednesday said India is facing the issue of unemployability in the financial services sector because there were no takers of nearly 18 lakhs jobs last year.

GIFT City in Gandhinagar, which employs nearly 6,000 people in the financial services sector, will generate nearly 1.5 lakh jobs in this sector in the next five years, FPSB India CEO Krishan Mishra told here on Wednesday.

"Last year, as per the data provided by the National Career Services portal of the central government, India created 46.86 lakh jobs in financial services. Of those, only 27.5 lakh jobs were filled. It shows that there were no takers for 18 lakh jobs. This is because of unemployability. Jobs are there, but people are not capable enough to take them up," said Mishra.

"Banks, insurance companies, brokerage houses and mutual fund companies are always in need of trained people. If you conduct an online job search, you will find that there are about 40 times as many jobs as the number of Certified Financial Planner (CFP) professionals available," he said.



***Of those, only 27.5 lakh jobs were filled. It shows that there were no takers for 18 lakh jobs. This is because of unemployability. Jobs are there, but people are not capable enough to take them up," said Mishra***

FPSB India is the Indian subsidiary of Financial Planning Standards Board Ltd (FPSB Ltd) -- the global standards-setting body for the financial planning profession and owner of the international Certified Financial Planner (CFP) certification programme.

At present, there are 2,731 CFP professionals in India against 2.23 lakh worldwide. By 2030, there will be around 10,000 CFPs in India as against the requirement of 1,00,000 due to huge demand, said Mishra.

"Personal finance was ignored in India. People thought financial planning is for the elite. But, in reality, wealth management is for the elite while financial planning is for everyone. We need to be financially educated," said Mishra.

## 'Current GST rate for PVs outdated; needs a relook'

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI



The current GST rate structure of passenger vehicles in India is outdated and needs to be aligned with the new developments in the auto industry, according to JSW MG Motor India CEO Emeritus Rajeev Chaba.

The government should consider the overall perspective of vehicular emissions, reduction of import bill, sustainable local supply chain and total cost of ownership while formulating policies on the auto sector, he added.

Amid speculations that hybrid vehicles could be considered for tax incentives ahead of the Union Budget, he said only the strong 'plug-in' hybrids, which have the capability to also run as a battery electric vehicle independent from the internal combustion engine, should be considered for such benefits.

"Earlier, we said the size of the car was sub-four meters. We said 1.2-liter engine.

## Corporate funding in solar sector dips 10 % to US$ 16.6 bn: Mercom

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

Total corporate funding in the solar sector globally fell by 10 per cent to USD 16.6 billion in January-June 2024 due to uncertainties in major markets including the US, according to Mercom Capital.

In the first half of 2023, the global solar energy sector attracted USD 18.5 billion of investment, the US-based research firm said in a report.

"Total corporate funding, including venture capital/private equity (VC) funding, public market, and debt financing, in 1H 2024 totaled USD 16.6 billion compared to USD 18.5 billion raised in 1H 2023. The number of deals increased 9 per cent to 87 deals in 1H 2024 compared to 80 during the same period last year," the 'Solar Funding and M&A Report' said.



***The number of deals increased 9 per cent to 87 deals in 1H 2024 compared to 80 during the same period last year," the 'Solar Funding and M&A Report' said***

"This has happened because of uncertainties in major markets. The financing activity in the solar sector remains restrained despite tailwinds from the Inflation Reduction Act and favourable global policies," said Raj Prabhu, CEO of Mercom Capital Group.

Besides, high interest rates, an uncertain rate trajectory and timeline, increasing trade barriers, supply chain challenges, concerns about the US presidential election's impact on the sector, and constantly evolving trade policies have created an unpredictable and uncertain climate.

This has slowed down development, investments, and decision-making, he added. In the first half of 2024.




## Small stocks reap big gains; BSE midcap gauge jumps 30%

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

Smaller stocks have emerged as markets' favourites so far this year, giving big returns to investors amid optimism over the country's macroeconomic fundamentals and surge in domestic liquidity.

Till July 16 this year, the BSE midcap gauge has jumped 10,984.72 points or 29.81 per cent, while the smallcap index has surged 11,628.13 points or 27.24 per cent. In comparison, the BSE 30-share benchmark Sensex has rallied 8,476.29 points or 11.73 per cent so far this year. "The primary reason for the outperformance of midcap and smallcap stocks is the surge in domestic liquidity. A substantial amount of domestic money is flowing into these segments through mutual funds, portfolio management services (PMS), and direct investments," said Sunil Nyati, Managing Director, Swastika Investmart Ltd. We are currently in a structural bull market, where midcap and smallcap stocks tend to outperform, he noted.

"While largecap stocks have also performed well, they have lagged behind midcap and smallcap stocks due to selling by foreign institutional investors (FIIs)," Nyati added.



## 'Measures expected promote investments in clean energy sector'

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

The government is expected to announce a slew of measures in the full Budget for fiscal year 2024-25 to promote investments in the renewable energy space, experts say.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the 2024-25 Union Budget in Parliament on July 23.

Their expectation is that the government may announce policy-related measures, viability gap funding (VGF) and incentive schemes for the clean energy industry, the experts said. "We expect the focus of the budget to remain green growth based... We expect the budget to focus more on renewables, storage, transmission and distribution network strengthening schemes.

"We expect policy measures to incentivise, and to encourage investments in (battery) storage groups," Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice President & Group Head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA Ltd said.

There is a slow progress being witnessed in pumped storage projects (PSP) space. Some policy bridges need to be announced to expedite the implementation of these projects as these are going to be very systemically.

NEW MANUFACTURING COS

# PWC for extension of beneficial tax regime

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI




Tax consultancy firm PWC has urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharman to extend the beneficial tax regime for new manufacturing companies and introduce a comprehensive tax amnesty scheme for cases related to Customs.

Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget for 2024-25 on July 23.

"I think the Make in India is the first thing which comes to mind, and you will recall that in 2019, the government introduced a 15 per cent rate for new manufacturing companies, which lapsed on March 31, 2024. "I think that is one extension, which is being expected, and the expectation is also that instead of giving a year-on-year extension if we can look at the block period, say for the next five years because shifting a manufacturing is a big decision and the corporates may take time before making a decision and make it viable, feasible and that's the first bit," said Sandeep Puri, Partner, Price Waterhouse & Co LLP. Section 115BAB of the Income Tax Act offers a concessional tax rate of 15 per cent for new domestic manufacturing companies. Initially, this benefit was available for companies set up and registered after October 1, 2019, and commencing production by March 31, 2023, which was later extended to March 31, 2024, to account for delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

PwC has also made a case for the introduction of a comprehensive tax amnesty scheme under Customs to clear past litigations on the lines similar to the Sabka Vishwas Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme, 2019, for pre-GST era indirect taxes and Vivad Se Vishwas scheme for Income tax.

As part of the amnesty scheme, the government could provide a partial waiver of the duty in dispute, depending on the quantum involved and a complete waiver of interest and penalty.

On Tuesday, Sitharaman participated in a traditional 'halwa' ceremony, marking the final stage for preparation of the Union Budget 2024-25 to be unveiled on July 23 in the Lok Sabha.

The ceremony is a ritual in which traditional dessert 'halwa' is prepared and served to officials and staff members of the finance ministry who are involved in the preparation of the budget. It is organised in the basement of the North Block, which houses the ministry in the national capital and is attended by the finance minister and other high-ranking officials.

## India, UK trade ministers discuss plan on proposed FTA

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal met UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds in Italy and discussed plans to take forward the negotiations on the proposed free trade agreement, an official statement said on Wednesday.

The bilateral meeting took place on the sidelines of the G7 Trade Ministers' meeting at Reggio Calabria, Italy.

The India-UK talks for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) began in January 2022. The 14th round of talks stalled as the two nations stepped into their general election cycles.

"Goyal congratulated Mr. Jonathan Reynolds on his appointment and discussed deepening bilateral economic relations. The conversation included plans to take forward the discussions on FTA between India and the UK," the commerce ministry said.




In an FTA, two or more trading partners either significantly reduce or eliminate customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. Besides, they also ease norms to promote and facilitate trade in services and investments.

There are pending issues in both goods and services sectors.

The Indian industry is demanding greater access for its skilled professionals from sectors like IT and healthcare in the UK market, besides market access for several goods at nil customs duty. On the other hand, the UK is seeking a significant cut in import duties on goods such as scotch whiskey, electric vehicles, lamb meat, chocolates and certain confectionary items.

Thursday
July 18, 2024

the pioneer

Hyderabad

Follow us on @TheDailyPioneer

facebook.com/dailypioneer

# LAVANYA GUDELLI: Aspire to inspire, before you expire



**LAVANYA GUDELLI, THROUGH HER BE THE CHANGE FOUNDATION, HAS BEEN WORKING TOWARDS SEVERAL INITIATIVES FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE. SHE TALKS TO *THE PIONEER* ABOUT HER PASSION FOR THE SOCIAL CAUSE AND MOTIVE BEHIND HER FOUNDATION**

AARTI SREENATH

Lavanya Gudelli, a radiant example of hope and fortitude, shared her inspiring journey and the profound motivations that shaped her into the dynamic community leader she is today. As the founder of Be The Change Foundation, her story is a testament to perseverance, passion and the indomitable human spirit.

"The motivation started when I was studying in the 6th grade in my village," Lavanya began with her voice filled with nostalgia. Her true inspiration came from none other than Mother Teresa. She recalled how she was always inclined to give back to the community, even as a young, reserved and introverted child. "Children can get addicted to video games or bad things, but if tuned in the right way, they can create wonders," she emphasised, highlighting the importance of guiding youth towards positive endeavours.

Her spirituality played a significant role in her early life. Missionary books deeply influenced her values and outlook on life. "I am always a giver," she said with conviction. "I don't read missionary books now, but at the time, I used to." Despite the lack of resources and support, her inherent drive to serve others never wavered.

Her educational journey was marked by significant challenges. She was an engineering student in computer science but couldn't complete it due to some personal and financial struggles. "We were four kids and my father, was an auto driver, while my mother worked as a maid. I'm the only graduate from my entire bloodline," she explained.

Despite all of the setbacks, she never lost sight of her goals. Her father's unwavering support and sacrifices were crucial, despite his lack of formal education. She navigated numerous challenges, from finding college notifications in newspapers to securing admission to an MTC women's college. "I didn't even know it was a women's college when I joined," she laughed, recalling her surprise at finding herself among 200 girls.

Despite insecurities and feelings of inferiority, Lavanya persevered. She switched from engineering to BSc Electronics in correspondence and completed her degree. "When you're passionate about something and you're genuine, you get second chances," she affirmed, her words resonating with a profound truth. Lavanya's first exposure to social work came through an internship with the Youth Empowerment Foundation. Her zeal for social service and leadership skills quickly shone through.

In July 2018, Lavanya conceptualised 'Be The Change Foundation', inspired by the Gandhian quote, "Be the change that you want to see in the world." Without social media influence or the ability to travel extensively, she gathered over 200 volunteers through a WhatsApp group for their first event, a massive food distribution on Independence Day. "That was the first ever offline event I have done in a big range," she said proudly, her eyes shining with the memory.



Her journey, throughout has had its own challenges. Health issues, including a bout of facial paralysis and personal struggles did not deter her. "Despite the challenges, I got my first award in Ravindra Bharati in 2018, followed by the National Youth Icon Award in 2019," she recounted, her voice filled with pride. Lavanya did face criticism from her parents, who initially did not understand her dedication towards social service. "They told me, 'You are not a *crorepati* to go and donate things. First, make money.' But money can't make you a rich person. It's your passion and dedication," she asserted with conviction.

Be The Change Foundation focuses on various initiatives, with menstrual hygiene and health being a significant area of impact. Lavanya reflected on the success of their event, 'She Inspires' conferences, which acknowledge and celebrate women from diverse backgrounds. "We have done four years of complete She Inspires conferences. This August 15, we are completing six years successfully for Be The Change," she announced.

Focusing primarily on menstrual hygiene and health, especially in slum areas, she explained, "We give free pads and have our associate partners. We tied up with non-profit brands only." The impact of this initiative is significant, reaching over 10,000 women, both directly and indirectly.

Her personal passion extends beyond physical health to mental health. "Many people are suffering with a lot of trauma, a lot of disappointment and a lot of suicidal thoughts," she noted. To address these issues, she actively engages with various communities. "I go to colleges, schools, orphan homes and curate events. I deliver talks on why we should see life in a positive light," she explained.

Lavanya's role as a guest speaker on YouTube and other platforms further amplifies her message of hope and resilience.

Lavanya's journey underscores passion and the profound impact of individual determination. "We have to do something before we expire. Always aspire to inspire," she concluded, her words a powerful reminder of the impact one individual can have on the world.





**The past week of *Bigg Boss OTT3* saw the eviction of tarot card reader Munisha Khatwani. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, she speaks of her eviction, contestants being image-conscious and also discusses the incident between Armaan Malik and Vishal**

## 'Entering *BB* house without strategies went against me'

TEJAL SINHA

Rightly termed India's most controversial show, *Bigg Boss* stands out to be true to it. The ongoing *Bigg Boss OTT 3* has certainly been around multiple controversies. Just as the format brings in—also comes the weekly eviction.

The past week saw the exit of Tarot card reader Munisha Khatwani and also the season's first rule break—violence by YouTuber Armaan Malik.

As we get into a chat with the former contestant, though she felt she had the potential to hang in there at the house for more time, she has no regrets about getting out of the house either. "My journey has been very interesting. The show has been memorable for me, especially with all the personal equations that I have made with Lovekesh and Vishal. The best relationship I formed is very clear to everybody; it's with Love, Vishal and everybody knows they are brothers to me and these are the only true relationships I could form in the house."

While many would initially be skeptical about getting into the show, the former actress wasn't really skeptical but rather excited. "Since there was a lot of back and forth in my process, I was finalised pretty late. I got to know that I was entering the *Bigg Boss* house at the very last moment. So yeah, I was excited to get in, though I should have been skeptical (she giggles)."

The fights, the friendship breaks, the backstabs and all the negativity around have been pretty evident for the avid viewers of the show. In fact, Munisha too felt that living with the negativity and politics in the house was the most challenging and difficult part of the show. She believes that she could survive with less food, fewer facilities, or even with no communication, but the negativity and politics just got to her.

"Entering the house with no strategies went against me," says Khatwani, who is, however, proud of the fact that she was stuck with Lovekesh and Vishal till the very end. But again, "Being honest and introverted doesn't turn out well because I think you need to play differently as you enter the house and I feel I am not capable of that."

However, being spiritual did help her out in the best way possible.

She does feel that with her background in tarot reading, she found out the true aura of her fellow contestants, which turned out to be difficult for her to vibe with them. "I could see that most of them are not authentic."

A lot of people, she says, in the house are image-conscious.

Further in this chat, we also went on to discuss the incident of Armaan slapping Vishal, to which she shares that she does not support any such action. Like most people, she says she too opposes violence. The incident further led to Armaan Malik being nominated for the entire season. However, looking at the other side of the coin, without being objective, she said, "If we look at it from the standpoint of a husband and wife, I believe anyone could have done the same thing and would lose their temper. I'm not saying that's appropriate, but when it comes to their spouse or family, individuals occasionally overreact or get quite protective. I still find it unacceptable."

Going ahead and discussing the issue, she does highlight that, regretfully, because Payal did not use the exact same words, the problem got worse. She shares, "According to what I know about Vishal, he is a kind man with no bad intentions. He has strong family values and comes from a respectable household. The fact that he wasn't given the chance to present his side of the story is unfair. He ought to have been given an opportunity to defend himself, but everyone was free to condemn and boycott him. But by then, everyone had come to their own opinions."

As we head towards the end of the chat, she cordially concludes, saying, "I don't know about Wildcard, but I would surely want to go up on the weekend and speak to Vishal and Love. I am definitely rooting for them and all the wishes to them."

# DETOX DIETS: EFFECTIVE OR JUST A FAD?

**In recent years, detoxification or 'detox' diets have surged in popularity, touted as a quick fix to eliminate toxins from the body, promote overall health, and assist with weight loss. But do these diets live up to the hype?**

### Understanding detox diets

Detox diets are short-term dietary interventions designed to cleanse the body. They often involve a period of fasting, followed by a strict diet of fruits, vegetables, juices and water. Proponents claim that detox diets can help with weight loss, enhance the function of the liver, kidneys and colon and improve overall health.

### Science behind detox diets

Despite their popularity, the scientific evidence supporting detox diets is limited and of low quality. Studies on detox diets often have significant design flaws, including small sample sizes, lack of control groups and short durations. Consequently, their findings are not robust enough to draw definitive conclusions.

A 2015 review of National Centre for Biotechnology Information concluded that there is no compelling research to support the use of detox diets for weight management or toxin elimination. Similarly, in 2017 the report highlights, while detox diets, particularly those involving juicing, can lead to initial weight loss due to a severe calorie deficit, this weight loss is usually not sustainable. Once individuals resume their regular eating patterns, they often regain the lost weight.

### Potential benefits

While the evidence for detox diets is not strong, some people may experience temporary benefits. The initial weight loss, for instance, can be motivating. Additionally, detox diets typically eliminate processed foods, refined sugars, and unhealthy fats, leading to a more nutrient-dense intake. This shift can result in a temporary improvement in energy levels and mood, likely due to increased consumption of vitamins and minerals.

### Potential risks

However, detox diets are not without risks. The severe calorie restriction can lead to nutrient deficiencies, fatigue, dizziness and low blood sugar levels. Moreover, detox diets can disrupt the balance of gut bacteria, leading to digestive issues. For individuals with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, detox diets can be particularly dangerous and should be approached with caution.



### Long-term impact

One of the critical criticisms of detox diets is the lack of evidence regarding their long-term effects. No studies have assessed the prolonged impact of detoxification programs on health, weight, or toxin levels. This gap in research raises concerns about the potential for negative consequences that may arise from repeated use of detox diets.

### Healthy alternatives

Rather than resorting to extreme detox diets, adopting a balanced, sustainable approach to nutrition and health is advisable. Consuming a diet rich in whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats, can naturally support the body's detoxification processes. Regular physical activity, adequate hydration and sufficient sleep are also crucial for maintaining overall health and well-being.

### Conclusion

While the allure of detox diets is understandable, the current evidence does not support their effectiveness for long-term weight management or detoxification. A balanced, nutrient-rich diet and a healthy lifestyle remain the most effective ways to promote overall health and well-being. Before embarking on any detox diet, it's essential to consult with a healthcare professional to ensure it is safe and appropriate for your individual health needs.

In the end, the best approach to detoxification is one that supports your body's natural processes, rather than relying on quick fixes or extreme dietary interventions.

***(The author, Sanchi Tiwari, is a nutritionist, at Lord's Mark Biotech.)***

the pioneer
Hyderabad | Thursday July 18, 2024

# what's brewing?

## PARTY


Akshara Haasan


The IIFA Utsavam global celebrations began in Hyderabad with a lavish Official India Press Conference, setting off unparalleled levels of anticipation.The much awaited two-day event, which is expected to honour the lively cinematic luminaries of the Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada film industries and commemorate the triumphs of South Indian cinema, was put in motion by the IIFA Utsavam Official India Press Conference


Sreeleela


Malashree and Aradhanaa


Raashii Khanna


Pragya Jaiswal


Simran

Photos by- SV Chary


Malvika Rao


Aanchal


Anika

Sobé Décor celebrated the first anniversary of its Hyderabad outlet. As a part of the celebration, live music was held at the outlet. This celebration was attended by award-winning architects and elite customers, along with the founder Nivedita Jegadeesh and partner Malvika Nishant, and co-hosted by Aanchal Bansal.


Nivedita Jegadeesh


Kirty and Anuja

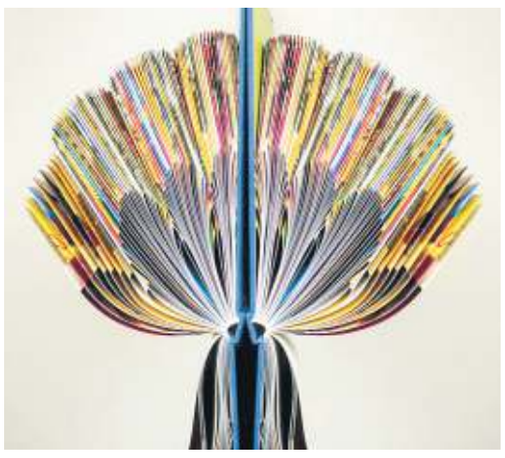

Shikha


Vineeta


Komal,Madhulika and Ritika

At a press conference at SOBHA Neopolis, Filmfare announced the 69th SOBHA Filmfare Awards South 2024 in collaboration with Kamar Film Factory. The greatest in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam movies are honoured at this event. At the press conference where officials introduced the iconic black lady with Kamar Film Factory, a special surprise was organised. Actors Rukmini Vasanth and Malavika Mohanan, as well as Jitesh Pillaai, Editor-in-Chief of Filmfare and Sumeet Chunkhare, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, SOBHA Limited, Kamar D, Kamar Film Factory, unbosomed the award.



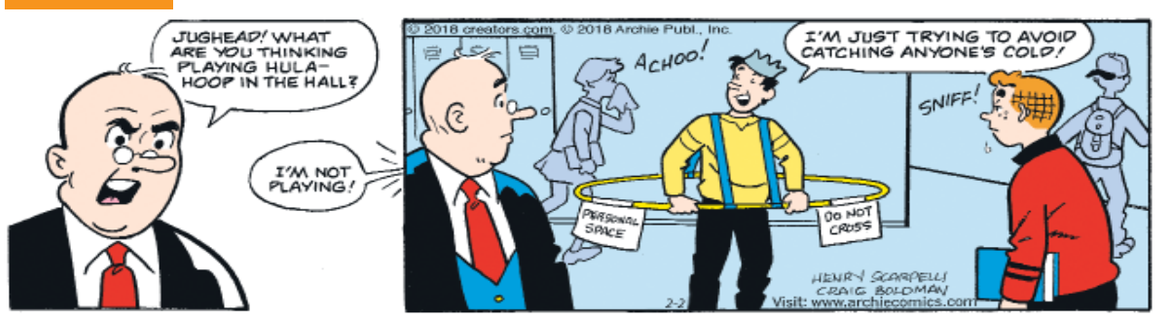



Hyderabad will host the premiere of Srila Chatterjee's well-known Affordable Art India, which will include an intriguing and varied selection of artwork from all throughout the nation. A wide range of artistic expressions, from traditional vintage items to new contemporary pieces, will be showcased in Affordable Art India.

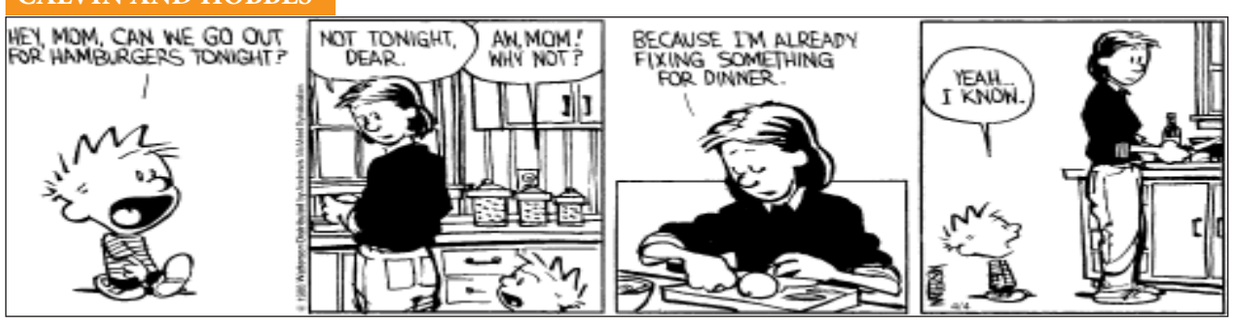
The top ed-tech platform in India, Physics Wallah (PW), has seen a notable rise in the number of female students enrolling in its upskilling courses through PW Skills. The percentage of female participants increased from 20% in 2023 to 35% in 2024. This increase is ascribed to increasing awareness of the caliber of education offered and the beneficial effects that upskilling courses have on students' professional advancement.

## FUN

### ARCHIE




### CALVIN AND HOBBES




### GARFIELD



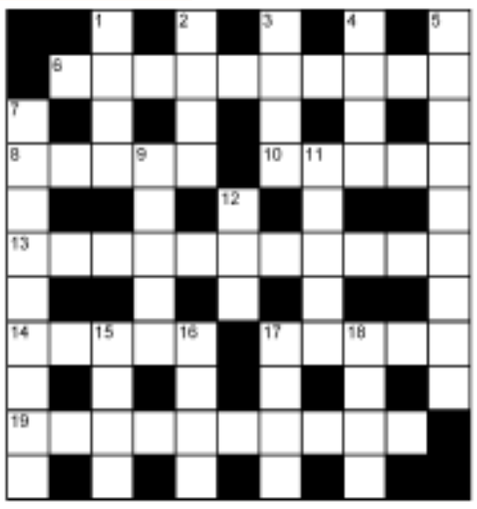

### REALITY CHECK




### SPEED BUMP




### CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**

6 A railway engine
8 Wear these on fingers
10 An orchestra conductor's stick
13 Glass buildings for growing plants
14 Small cities
17 Nairobi is the capital of this country in Africa
19 In the middle of lots of people

**DOWN**

1 The middle of the day
2 Things to play with
3 A wartime explosive
4 Birthday present
5 A day of the week
7 Opposite of dullest
9 The colour of grass
11 Make smile or laugh
12 Timid
15 This lives in soil
16 Cold winter flakes
17 He wears a crown
18 Require

SOLUTION



### NANCY




### GINGER MEGGS




### SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1 | 2 | 5 | | 3 | | | |
| | 9 | 5 | | | 6 | | | 1 |
| | 3 | | 1 | | | | | 8 |
| | | | | | | | 6 | |
| | 5 | | 6 | 1 | 8 | | 9 | |
| | 7 | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | 5 | | 8 | |
| 9 | | | 2 | | | 3 | 7 | |
| | | | 9 | | 7 | 1 | 2 | 6 |

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

**Yesterday's solution**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 8 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| 2 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| 7 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 9 |
| 5 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| 9 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 1 |
| 1 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 4 |

**Rules**

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

# 'I took inspiration from my father-in-law to play a cop in *Rippen Swamy*'

**Kannada superstar Vijay Raghavendra, who was recently present at the IIFA Utsavam press conference held in Hyderabad, speaks exclusively with *The Pioneer* about hosting IIFA 2024, his craft and deets about his upcoming projects**



AARTI SREENATH

Anticipation soared to unprecedented levels as the global festivities of IIFA Utsavam kicked off with a grand official India Press Conference at Novotel in Hyderabad. It set the stage for the highly anticipated two-day extravaganza, which is all set to celebrate the achievements of South Indian cinema and honour the vibrant Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada film industry cinematic luminaries.

The event was attended by a glittering array of celebs from South India, including Rana Daggubati, Rockstar DSP, Vijay Raghavendra, Teja Sajja, Raashi Khanna, Sreeleela, Pearle Maaney, Pragya Jaiswal, Malashree Ramanna, Aradhana Ram, Sudhev Nair, Simran Rishi Bagga, Resul Pookutty and Kushboo.

***The Pioneer*** had the exclusive opportunity to sit down with Kannada superstar Vijay Raghavendra. In our interaction, Vijay shared insights into his illustrious career and his thoughts on the evolving landscape of Kannada.

Vijay Raghavendra, a.k.a. Chinnari Mutha, is a prominent Kannada actor known for his versatility and talent. He started his career as a child artist, also crediting a National Award for his performance in *Kotreshi Kanasu*.

Raghavendra continues to shine in Kannada cinema and recently took part in a press conference for the IIFA Utsavam 2024. He will also be hosting IIFA 2024 for the Kannada audience. When asked about his thoughts on being a part of IIFA Utsavam this year, Vijay's enthusiasm was palpable. "The most important thing is the uniting of all of us across the nation, irrespective of the region and language. All the superstars meet at a place to become just actors; they come down to become friends in one common place, looking up to each other and appreciating each other. I think IIFA is all about celebration. The very word 'Utsavam' means celebration." Reflecting on his beginnings in Kannada cinema and what inspired him to pursue acting, the *Kadda Chithra* actor shared, "I come from a cinema family. Dr. Rajkumar being my uncle, I spent my childhood watching his films and going to his shoots. By the time I finished my B.Com, I knew I had to pursue my career in acting. I did my acting course in Chennai and was fortunate to get the role in the remake of a Telugu film *Nuvve Kavali*. In Kannada, it was called *Ninagagi*, which was a huge success. From then on, there's been no looking back. I've been getting good roles. No doubt the career graph has been erratic at times, but I've learned a lot."

When inquired about how IIFA influences and the global perception of Indian cinema, particularly Kannada films, Vijay credited the recent successes for the shift.

"These days, from the past two to three years, thanks to movies like *KGF* and *Kantara*, also thanks to the producers and makers who made it possible. The world today recognises Kannada cinema as Indian cinema. That's a huge link to us, belonging to the film fraternity."

As an actor in the Kannada region, Vijay expressed his pride in the recognition of regional cinema on international platforms like IIFA. "We feel proud. We are getting to the place where we actually belong, where our stories deserve to be told globally. People are drawing inspiration from Kannada films, like they were 25–30 years ago. Something was missing in between, but now we are getting the hang of it and we are able to collaborate with other actors coming to Kannada and working with us, appreciating the talent down here." On the topic of how events like IIFA can help evolve Kannada cinema on a global scale, Vijay emphasised the importance of evolution.

"It has to evolve; the process is always there. Evolution has always been a part of our nature. When cinema evolves, it also means that people are evolving with it, along with the audience. The audience is ready to receive content because they get to see a good story, irrespective of the language. Thanks to platforms like OTT and events like IIFA, bringing them all together, celebrating and showcasing them in a way that the entire world gets to see them on one platform. This becomes a very important part of the evolution of cinema."

Discussing the challenges he faced while preparing for roles, the *Marichi* actor highlighted a recent experience. "There is one called *Rippen Swamy*, which is getting ready for release. I'm playing a totally negative role. The audience have never seen me in a negative role. It's something I'm looking forward to and to stretch myself as an actor. In this film, I play the character of a cop, a character that I have never played. When I got the opportunity, it was challenging—looking like a cop to an extent but convincing the audience that a police officer is actually emoting particular scenes, was the toughest part. It requires a lot of observation. I had to observe people and listen to their experiences. My father-in-law is a retired ACP and I heard stories from him. I had to add a pinch of myself to the character, in a very subtle way."

Regarding future roles, Vijay shared his passion for intense and relatable characters. "I have always loved to play intense roles—roles that people connect to easily, roles that have the capacity to convey something to people without actually preaching. That is something I would love to do."

When asked about films that influenced him, Vijay mentioned *Bangaarada Manushya*. "It was directed by S. Siddalingaiah sir, decades ago. Such films could be called a mass success or commercial success because, when we preach in a film that it's appreciated; it's when we emote and the message is conveyed and received by the audience. Right from the front-seat audience to the highest-placed person in society, everybody's family got to watch that film and got influenced by its quality and narration. That has influenced me as an audience and my perception of cinema." As we went ahead in this chat, the *Raaghu* actor went on to discuss his desired directors, he looks forward to work with. "I'm a greedy person; three would definitely not be enough. There's always Mani Ratnam sir. I would like to work with Pradeep Ranganathan, the *Love Today* filmmaker and we have fantastic directors in Kannada too. I would love to work with Rishab Shetty sir."

As he continues to take on challenging roles and push the boundaries of regional cinema, audiences can look forward to more stellar performances from this beloved actor.

Meanwhile, the IIFA Utsavam continues to be a celebration for Indian cinema, providing a grand platform that not only honors the achievements of the South Indian film industry but also unites actors and filmmakers from various regions under one roof.

# *DASARA, HI NANNA, BABY, BALAGAM* RULE THE ROOST

PNS | HYDERABAD



Natural star Nani has once again captured the spotlight with his exceptional performances in *Dasara* and *Hi Nanna*. Both films have earned substantial recognition, securing multiple nominations at two of the most prestigious awards ceremonies in Indian cinema: the South Indian International Movie Awards (SIIMA) and the Filmfare Awards.

At the SIIMA Awards, Nani's *Dasara* and *Hi Nanna* have made a remarkable impact. *Dasara* has received an impressive 11 nominations, reflecting the film's widespread acclaim and Nani's standout performance. *Hi Nanna* is also garnering attention with 10 nominations, further showcasing Nani's versatility and the film's success.

The Filmfare Awards have similarly recognised the star's remarkable contributions, with Dasara being nominated in 8 major categories and *Hi Nanna* receiving 9 nominations, underscoring the film's resonant impact and Nani's celebrated role.

As fans and industry professionals eagerly await the awards ceremonies, the recognition of Nani's work in both Dasara and Hi Nanna reaffirms his status as one of the most talented and influential actors in contemporary cinema.

On the other hand, last year's biggest box office hit, "Baby," garnered numerous awards and accolades, solidifying its status as a cult favorite that resonated strongly with audiences and garnered industry recognition. Directed by Sai Rajesh, the film stars Anand Devarakonda, Vaishnavi Chaitanya, and Viraj Ashwin in pivotal roles, and is produced by SKN under the Mass Movie Makers banner.

The film secured 8 major nominations in the Filmfare Awards, marking a significant achievement for a production that started as a small film and ended up as the year's biggest blockbuster. *Baby* has been nominated across various categories, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male), Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female), Best Music Director, Best Singer, and Best Lyricist.

The film's music, songs, and lyrics have been widely praised and are strong contenders for recognition at the awards ceremony.

Meanwhile, Priyadarshi starrer *Balagam* is proving that when good cinema is made, the accolades never stop pouring in. The film, which already bagged many international awards, made another achievement. It was nominated in 7 categories for the 2024 Filmfare Awards!

The 12th edition of the South Indian International Movie Awards (SIIMA) is scheduled to take place in Dubai on September 14 and 15, with extensive preparations underway. This year, an online voting system will be introduced to determine the winners. Fans can support their favorite films and stars by casting their votes on the official SIIMA website and Facebook page. It has to be awaited and seen how many awards these movies will bring home.

# *Bharateeyudu 2* trimmed by 11 mins 51 seconds



In a move designed to fine-tune the cinematic experience, the film *Bharatiyadu 2*, starring Universal Star Kamal Haasan and helmed by acclaimed director Shankar, has undergone a significant edit. The new version of the film, which is now 11 minutes and 51 seconds shorter, has officially hit theaters from the matinee shows on Wednesday.

Produced by Lyca Productions, *Bharatiyadu 2* has generated a whirlwind of responses since its release. While the film has received a spectrum of reviews on social media, ranging from enthusiastic praise to critical feedback, it is undeniably making a substantial impact among audiences.

The decision to cut the film by nearly 12 minutes comes as part of an effort to streamline the narrative and enhance viewer engagement. The editing adjustments are expected to refine the pacing and potentially address some of the critiques leveled at the original cut. The revised version of *Bharatiyadu 2* is now available in all theaters, promising a fresh take on what has already been a talked-about release. The film's performance in this new format will likely influence its ongoing reception and box office success.



# *Vidudala Part 2* first look reveals film's intensity

Following the tremendous success of director Vetrimaaran's *Vidudala Part 1*, expectations for the sequel have reached new heights. The blockbuster debut of the first installment has fueled immense curiosity and excitement among both fans and industry insiders for *Vidudala Part 2*.

Producer Elred Kumar of RS Infotainment is thrilled to reveal the first look of *Vidudala Part 2*, which will be showcased in both Tamil and Telugu. The film stars Vijay Sethupathi and Soori in lead roles, further igniting anticipation for the next chapter.

Elred Kumar expressed his enthusiasm, stating, "It's incredibly heartening for our entire team to receive such overwhelming support and appreciation from film enthusiasts. The success of the first installment has far surpassed our expectations. It's invigorating to hear from industry professionals and trade circles that the Vidudala franchise has effectively bridged the gap between commercial and parallel cinema, setting a new benchmark for future directors. We have every reason to celebrate.

Actor Soori's career has seen a remarkable surge following the success of *Vidudala Part 1* and *Garudan* and Vijay Sethupathi's recent blockbuster hit Maharaja has only added to the excitement. With so many positive elements surrounding *Vidudala Part 2*, we are eager to present the film in the best possible light. Vetrimaaran has put in meticulous effort to shape the sequel, and Isaignani Ilaiyaraaja's musical contributions will add depth to our story. We are nearing the completion of the film's shooting and aim to release it by the end of this year. The film also features performances from Bhavani Sri, Rajeev Menon, Gautham Vasudev Menon and Chetan. It also introduces a new array of talented actors, including Manju Warrier and Anurag Kashyap." Fans can expect announcements regarding the film's trailer, audio release and worldwide theatrical debut soon.



# NAVEEN POLISHETTY OPENS UP ON MULTIPLE FRACTURES IN HAND!

In a recent social media post, young actor Naveen Polishety confirmed that he is currently recovering from multiple fractures in his hand. The star, known for his string of blockbuster hits, opened up about the challenges he is facing during this difficult time, sharing an emotional and heartfelt note with his fans.

Naveen Polishety, who has been making waves in the industry with consecutive hits, has been notably absent from the media and public appearances recently. The injury, which he described as a significant setback, has been the reason for his low profile. Despite this, Polishety assured his fans that development work on his upcoming projects is progressing robustly.

In his emotional update, Polishety expressed gratitude for the support he has received and acknowledged the tough road ahead for his recovery. He remains hopeful and determined to return to the big screen, stronger than ever. "Recovery has been tough, but I am immensely grateful for the support from my fans and well-wishers. This injury has been a challenging chapter, but I am focused on getting back to full strength. In the meantime, work on my upcoming films continues in full swing, and I can't wait to be back in action," Naveen Polishety wrote.

The young actor's absence has been keenly felt by his fanbase, who are eagerly anticipating his return. Polishety has an exciting lineup of films with prominent production houses such as Sithara Entertainment, Mythri Movie Makers, Niharika Entertainment, and others. Fans are looking forward to his charismatic return to the big screen, and the industry buzz around his forthcoming projects remains high.

Meanwhile, his film *Miss Shetty Mr. Polishetty* with Anushka Shetty released on September 7 last year achieved great success. The film has shown its strength in the recently announced Filmfare South 2024 nominations, receiving nominations in three major categories.

Naveen Polishetty has been nominated for Best Actor Male, while Anushka Shetty has been nominated for Best Actor Female. *Miss Shetty Mr. Polishetty* has also received a nomination in the Best Movie category. Naveen Polishetty not only entertained audiences with his stand-up comedy but also delivered emotionally stirring performances that impressed. Anushka Shetty's portrayal touched audiences with its depth of emotion.

# Chidambaram makes B'wood entry

Renowned for his directorial brilliance in Malayalam cinema, Chidambaram is all set to make his mark in the Hindi film industry with an exciting new project in collaboration with Phantom Studios. The announcement was officially made by Srishti Behl, CEO of Phantom Studios, signaling a significant step for both the director and the production house into new creative territories.

Phantom Studios took to their Instagram handle to make the announcement that read, "We're thrilled to commence a new collaborative journey with the immensely talented Chidambaram! He's made his mark in the south with his unique vision and storytelling prowess, and we're excited to work on his debut in hindi cinema!

Chidambaram was applauded for his work on *Manjummel Boys*, which has been a critical as well as a commercial success. According to the box office report, the film opened with Rs. 3.3 crores at the box office and went on to break several box office records by earning Rs. 242.3 crores lifetime collection. *Manjummel Boys*, which was made on a budget of Rs. 20 crores, became the first Malayalam film to cross more than Rs 200 crores at the box office leaving behind the record set by 2018 which was released in 2023. It also emerged as one of the highest grossing Indian films of 2024.



Chidambaram has succeeded in understanding the pulse of the audience and crafts narratives that are compelling and engaging. Known for his knack for creating visually appealing and grand spectacles, which includes elaborate sets, stunning cinematography and choreographed action sequences that give the audience some adrenaline pumping moments, it is assured that his films are designed to entertain.

Speaking about his debut in Hindi cinema, Chidambaram expressed his excitement, stating, "I am very excited to take this step forward to Hindi mainstream cinema. Although *Manjummel Boys* will always remain special, I am honored and excited to collaborate with Phantom Studios for my first Hindi feature film. It's an opportunity to explore new narratives and reach out to a wider audience, while staying true to the essence of storytelling that defines my work." As the project moves forward, all eyes are on Chidambaram and Phantom Studios, eagerly anticipating the unveiling of their collaborative masterpiece that is sure to leave an indelible mark on Hindi cinema.

# Allu Sirish' *Buddy* to now release on Aug 2

The next big-screen release from megastar Allu Sirish, *Buddy*, is helmed by San Anton. The movie was originally supposed to come out on July 26, 2024, but it will now come out on August 2, 2024.

This revised release date is in line with the release of four other Telugu movies: *Alanaati Ramachandrudu, Usha Parinayam, Operation Raavan* and *Tiragabadara Saami*. It will be interesting to watch Buddy's performance during this competition.

Hiphop Tamizha composed the music for the film, which stars Gayatri Bhardwaj, Mohammed Ali, Ajmal Amir, Prisha Singh, Mukesh Rishi and others in important parts.



the pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JULY 18, 2024



# Suryakumar holds 2nd spot, Jaiswal make gains in ICC T20I batting rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI



The big-hitting Suryakumar Yadav is the highest placed Indian at second spot, while young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal occupies the sixth position in the ICC T20I batting rankings issued on Wednesday.

Ruturaj Gaikwad has dropped a place to the eighth position in the T20 batters' list, which was updated following India's recent 4-1 series triumph over Zimbabwe.

Jaiswal was the big winner following his 141 runs in the series as he rose four places, behind No.1 ranked batter Travis Head of Australia and Suryakumar.

Shubman Gill, who led India against Zimbabwe in the absence of senior players and was the leading run-scorer of the series with 170 runs from five innings, moved up a whopping 36 places to 37th.

No Indian features in the top 10 of the T20I bowlers rankings. Axar Patel, who was rested for the Zimbabwe series, dropped four places to 13th spot.

Fast bowler Mukesh Kumar and spinner Washington Sundar also made upward movements.

Mukesh, who scalped eight wickets from three games, has gained 36 places to rise to 46th spot. Washington, who picked up eight wickets in five matches, has risen 21 spots to 73rd rank.

England's Adil Rashid is leading T20I bowlers' chart ahead of South Africa's Anrich Nortje and Wanindu Hasaranga of Sri Lanka.

In the T20I all-rounders' rankings, India's Hardik Pandya dropped four places to sixth while Axar slipped one rung to 13th.

Washington (41st) and Shivam Dube (43rd) have risen by eight and 35 places to 41st abd 43rd spots respectively.

Sri Lanka's Hasaranga continues to top the all-rounders' list ahead os Australia's Marcus Stoinis and Zimbabwe skipper Sikandar Raza.




# Roshni scores hat-trick as Hockey Jharkhand wins

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Hockey Jharkhand thrashed Assam Hockey 13-0 in the women's category with the young Roshni Aind (24th, 32nd, 33rd) scoring a hat-trick in the 2nd Hockey India Junior Men & Women East Zone Championship here on Wednesday.

The other goal-scorers for the winners at the Netaji Subhas Eastern Centre were captain Rajni Kerketta (11, 27), Barwa Purnima (31, 46), Mundu Sukarmani (46, 56), Parwati Topno (21), Pinki Kumari (29), Hemrom Leoni (43) and Aupriya Soreng (59).

Hockey Association of Odisha too scored a lopsided 11-0 win against Hockey Bihar with Kachhap Rimjhim (20, 21, 31, 36) scoring four goals. Najiya Khatun (8, 34), Marandi Rajina (38), Khushi Kumari (44), Sugandha Sonam (49, 50), and Kumari Sharda (57) too were on target.

Hockey Bengal defeated Manipur Hockey 8-3 with Laltlanchhungi (4, 39, 49, 56), Shanti Horo (6, 33), and Lalpeksangi (23, 24) on target. For Manipur Hockey, Tanu Shorensangbam (26), Devi Mutum Priya (41) and Devi Laishram Ritu (48) scored the consolation goals.

In the men's section, Hockey Association of Odisha defeated Manipur Hockey 7-0 with Rohit Kullu (14, 60), Sunil Lakra (22), Deepak Pradhan (28, 50), Premdayal Giri (41) and Deonath Nanwar (47) on target.

Hockey Jharkhand crushed Hockey Bihar 9-0 with Abhishek Tigga (6), Jolen Topno (20, 59), Rohit Pradhan (21), Roshan Ekka (37), Ghuran Lohra (38), Adisan Minj (42), Faguwa Horo (44), and Dodray Sandeep (53) scoring the goals.

Hockey Bengal registered a 5-1 win over Assam Hockey. Karan Shaw (2, 23, 39) led the goal-scoring efforts for the winners while Prince Gabriyal Dhan (28) and Bishnu Paswan (34) too scored a goal each.



# England great Lucy Bronze joins Chelsea from Barcelona

AP ■ LONDON

England defender Lucy Bronze joined Chelsea from Barcelona on Wednesday on a two-year deal.

Five-time Champions League winner Bronze completed her move to the Women's Super League (WSL) champion after two years with Barcelona.

"To know I'm a Chelsea player still feels a little bit surreal. It's obviously a club I know so much about and have done for such a long time," she said.

"I'm really excited to be back in England. My family are so excited as well to get to more of my games."

Bronze is one of the most successful players in the history of the women's game after winning major titles with clubs and country.

The 32-year-old right-back won the European Championship with England in 2022 and was a losing finalist at last year's World Cup. She won three Champions League titles with Lyon and two more with Barcelona.

Bronze won eight league titles in England, France and Spain with Liverpool, Manchester City, Lyon and Barcelona.

She was runner-up for the Ballon d'Or award in 2019 and named FIFA Best Women's Player of the Year in 2020.

"Lucy will bring leadership to the group. She is a serial winner and a versatile defender. She has lots of experience and a winning mentality which we feel will fit well into the squad," Chelsea general manager Paul Green said.

Chelsea has dominated women's soccer in England and is the five-time defending WSL champion.

It was managed by Emma Hayes before she left for the United States Women's National Team at the end of the season.

# Analysis: Tiger Woods playing all the majors, but for how much longer?

AP ■ TROON (SCOTLAND)

Tiger Woods is playing all four majors for the first time since 2019, which at the start of the year would have been cause for great optimism.

The results paint a different picture.

He set a Masters record by making his 24th consecutive cut at Augusta National. And then he was gone by the weekend at the PGA Championship and the U.S. Open. He hasn't broken par since a 69 in the second round of the 2022 PGA Championship, and he needed that simply to make the cut.

His performance is starting to raise questions of how much longer he will play - how much longer he should play - to avoid lasting memories of a great champion slapping it around.

Leave it to Colin Montgomerie to put those thoughts into words found in a Times of London interview ahead of the British Open, when he said at one point, "What the hell is he doing?"

The entirety of what Montgomerie told the Times: "I hope people remember Tiger as Tiger was, the passion and the charismatic aura around him. There is none of that now. At Pinehurst he did not seem to enjoy a single shot and you think, What the hell is he doing?' He's coming to Troon and he won't enjoy it there, either."

Woods already has enjoyed one aspect of his stay at Royal Troon. That came Tuesday when he was asked about Montgomerie's comments. Woods relishes a chance to push back on criticism, particularly when the source is someone known for never winning a major.

"Well, as a past champion, I'm exempt until I'm 60," Woods said, speaking to his time at the British Open. "Colin's not. He's not a past champion, so he's not exempt. So he doesn't get the opportunity to make that decision. I do."

It brought up memories of an Open tradition some 20 years ago. Stewart McDougal was the press officer at the time, and he would ask Open champions who came into the press center to sign the table. At the end of the week, McDougal auctioned off the table for charity.

Montgomerie came in one day, saw all the signatures on the table and reached for pen.

"I'm sorry, Colin," McDougal told him. "It's only for Open champions."




Poor Monty.

The questions are fair enough, but there is something to be said about golfers being able to decide when their time is done. And given all that Woods has done in the game, it's probably not the best idea to show him the door no matter what numbers he is posting.

His 82 in the third round of the Masters was his highest in a major. The 78 on the Old Course two years ago in what likely will be his final time at St. Andrews.

He still draws the biggest crowd and generates the loudest buzz. And two numbers worth remembering are four and 15. He had four surgeries on his lower back, the last one to fuse his spine, and two years later he won his 15th major at the Masters.

Another number worth noting is 59 - the age of Tom Watson when he was an 8-foot par putt away from winning the British Open at Turnberry in 2009. The year before, Greg Norman was 53 when he had the 54-hole lead at Royal Birkdale.

Courses for the U.S. Majors might be getting too big for the 48-year-old Woods, whose body is held together by hardware. But there is something about links golf that is timeless.

"The older you get, the less you can carry the golf ball," Woods said. "But over here, you can run the golf ball 100 yards if you get the right wind and the right trajectory. ... You can play on the ground. You can burn it on the ground with a 1-iron, 2-iron, 3-wood, whatever.

"I think that's one of the reasons why you see older champions up there on the board because they're not forced to have to carry the ball 320 yards."

Woods always will be linked with Augusta National because of his watershed win at age 21 when he won the 1997 Masters by 12 shots, and it is the major he has won the most times. But for all his power as a younger man, no one hit irons like Woods. The flight of his shots was ideal for the links golf. It still is.

Woods showed up Tuesday wearing shorts, with a black compression sleeve covering his right leg. That was a clear reminder that age isn't as big an issue as health. Woods has been forthright in explaining his dilemma. His body won't allow him to play a full schedule, and when he shows up at the majors, he has to deal with competitive rust.

He could play more and risk not playing where it matters. That's something he will have to sort out. And it was telling that the PGA Tour created an exemption category exclusively for him to play in the $20 million signature events by adding him to the field - he wouldn't be taking a spot away from another player. How much he plays next year will be worth watching.

In the meantime, Woods has been at Royal Troon since Sunday. He has high hopes. Maybe they are unrealistic based on the scores he is positing, but they are his hopes.

"There is a time for all sportsmen to say goodbye, but it's very difficult to tell Tiger it's time to go," Montgomerie said. "Obviously, he still feels he can win. We are more realistic."

The truth is probably somewhere in between. But perhaps Woods still feels he can win because unlike Montgomerie, he has done it before.

# Scottie is adjusting to links golf and his role as best player in the world

AP ■ TROON (SCOTLAND)



The first stage of Scottie Scheffler's rise to the top of golf felt like warp speed. He went from No. 15 in the world to No. 1 in the span of five tournaments, and that was before he won the Masters for the first time.

Now he's on a level not seen since Tiger Woods was in his prime.

Scheffler is not the biggest draw at the British Open, not with Woods in the field. Rory McIlroy remains a big attraction, especially in the U.K., and he comes into Royal Troon as a sentimental favorite from his sad collapse in the U.S. Open and going 10 years without a major.

But any conversation at the final major of the year starts with Scheffler, a heavy favorite as he has been in every major this year. And that has taken him time to fully appreciate his status in the game.

"I never really thought of myself as anything but a golfer," Scheffler said Tuesday. "I was never trying to be famous. I didn't want to be a celebrity or whatever. I just wanted to become a good golfer and get the most out of myself. It's brought me this far, so I continue to just try to keep my head down and put in the work that got me here and just continue to practice and hopefully continue to get better."

His six PGA Tour victories before the calendar turned to July are the most since Arnold Palmer in 1962. Someone pointed out to Scheffler that Palmer's seventh victory that year was a claret jug he won at Royal Troon.

He wasn't sure how to react to that except to shrug his shoulders and say, "Yeah, that would be great."

"I love the history of the game, and there's certain things that I know and certain things that I don't. That was something that for some reason I just never stumbled across," he said, searching for the right answer. "So I had no idea that that was a thing."

The British Open figures to present his biggest test.

Scheffler is still relatively new to links golf - everything about his rise to No. 1 is new - having played this style in 2021 for the first time. He has learned to adjust the flight of his ball since links turf creates a little more spin on certain shots. The greens can be slower. Bunkers are to be avoided.

He is a two-time Masters champion, missed a U.S. Open playoff by one shot at The Country Club and was runner-up in the PGA Championship at Oak Hill. But he has never seriously contended in golf's oldest championship.

Even so, the love of the links is there.

He went to the J.P. McManus Pro-Am in Ireland a few years ago and took side trips to Lahinch and Ballybunion. He began this trip across the Atlantic Ocean by skipping the Scottish Open at The Renaissance Club - links style, but not links turf - and going to Turnberry with Sam Burns for a match with their caddies, both good players.

"A tremendous amount of fun," he said.

And then it was time for work at Royal Troon, the links renowned for having the longest hole (the 623-yard sixth) and shortest hole (the 123-yard eighth) in the British Open rotation.

Most peculiar about Troon is that the outward nine - typically with at least a wee breeze at the players' back - has two par 5s and measures 3,539 yards. The inward nine with the wind in the face has one par 5 and is 3,846 yards.

"It's basically a tale of two nines on this course," McIlroy said. "You feel like you have to make your score on the way out and then sort of hang on coming in."

McIlroy has far more experience on links golf - and a claret jug to show for it from his victory at Royal Liverpool in 2014 - but it still takes time to adjust because "you play 11 months of your golf every year in very different conditions."

Players also are preparing for weather described as "mixed," a gentle way of saying it probably won't be terribly pleasant for most of the week. Sunshine gave way to spells of rain on Tuesday, and that was before lunch was served.

PGA champion Xander Schauffele might be the second-most consistent player in golf behind Scheffler - nothing but top 20s in his last 10 starts and 51 cuts in a row - and has acquired a taste for less-than-pleasant conditions, particularly in the Open.

"If the weather gets really bad, you just have to take the bunkers out of play and really try and plot your way around," he said. "It doesn't have to be super pretty. Just kind of place the ball around the property and really just try and get it in the hole in as few shots as possible."

That's what Scheffler has been doing all year. Along with winning the Masters for the second time and The Players Championship, his other four wins have come in signature events against the strongest fields - on long courses and short, dry conditions and soft.

And with that has come a level of notoriety - the bizarre arrest at the PGA Championship certainly contributed - he wasn't expecting but has come to appreciate.

"Being out here playing in front of great crowds and having them scream your name and holler when you make putts and be truly rooting for you is a great feeling," he said.

AP ■ TROON (SCOTLAND)

# Jon hoping to ride Spanish momentum to

Jon Rahm felt like one of the most popular players when he arrived at Royal Troon, even if it had nothing to do with him or with his golf.

Spain is on quite the run at the moment. Carlos Alcaraz won Wimbledon on Sunday for his second Grand Slam title of the year, right before Spain defeated England in the European Championship final. It's the latter that made the Scottish fans celebrate the Spaniard.

No one in these parts likes to see England win anything.

"Played all 18 holes, and I think I got more congratulations for something that I didn't do than I ever have in my life," Rahm said Tuesday. "I don't know what they've done, but anytime anybody plays against the English national team, every other country in Europe just unifies against them.

"I think because we've heard It's Coming Home' so many times the last few years that nobody wants to see it come home at this point."

Throw in Sergio Garcia winning his first LIV Golf event at Valderrama, and Rahm



would like nothing more than to extend Spain's run of winners.

Mostly, he needs it for himself.

The major championship season ends with the British Open, and Rahm has been a no-show. He was the reigning Masters champion when he left for the Saudi riches of LIV Golf last December and he still hasn't won. His last victory was the Masters some 15 months ago.

He barely made the cut at the Masters. He missed the cut at the PGA Championship. And he didn't even get to play the U.S. Open because of a foot infection.

"Last year from the Masters on I didn't really play my best," Rahm said. "Ryder Cup was the only resemblance to maybe the early part of the year. But Nashville and last week (LIV events), I felt closer to getting to a higher level of golf where maybe there isn't as many thoughts on my process. Maybe I'm playing a little bit more freely and seeing the ball flight that I want to see more often.

"I'm getting much closer to what it might have been early last year."

# US women's soccer team fights the heat, plays to a draw against Costa Rica in final Olympic tune-up

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The heat was on for the U.S. Women's soccer team's final exhibition tune-up game before the Paris Olympics, with sweltering temperatures in the air and plenty of chances to score.

The goals did not come in a 0-0 draw against Costa Rica on Tuesday night, just the second time - and first since 2015 - the U.S. Did not win its last game before a major tournament. But the match showed the Americans could handle the kind of high temperatures that could await later this month.

"The last two games have been insane," defender Casey Krueger said, referring to back-to-back exhibition games before the team's cross-Atlantic flight. "I feel like this is going to be even hotter, so if we can play in this, it gives us confidence going into France, for sure."



It was 98 degrees Fahrenheit (37 Celsius) at kickoff after Washington tied the hottest day on record in the nation's capital at 104 (40C) hours earlier. It was still 94 (35C) when the match was over.

Coach Emma Hayes figured it would be a nice test for her players, given the forecast for nearly this level of heat during upcoming games in Marseilles later this month. "That's added value," Hayes said Monday. "It's perfect preparation. It's pretty hot down there, so this is a great opportunity for us to experience what we're going to face."

It played a role in Rose Lavelle being a precautionary late scratch because of leg tightness in warmups.

"No risks," Hayes said afterward. "She was a bit tight in her groin and I took no risks. ... I want to go into the Olympics with everybody available."

Korbin Albert replaced Lavelle in the starting lineup in the game taking place on a worn down field torn up by recent football, soccer and rugby matches and attended by 18,972 fans. Players either criticized the field or offered up no comment.

"The corners, there's no secret that it was definitely like I was kicking into dirt," forward Mallory Swanson said. "It was fine. Sometimes that's just the way it is going to be, and I think this team has always overcome adversity."

The U.S. Generated plenty of chances throughout - 26 shots total and 12 on goal - and was repeatedly denied by Costa Rica goaltender Noelia Bermúdez, who was arguably one of the best players on the field.